

COLLECTION
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EVELYN MARSTON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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VOL. XXVII

ELIZABETH MARSTON

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P-22

EVELYN MARSTON.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "EMILIA WYNDHAM," ETC.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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LEIPZIG

BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

1856.

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EVERY MAN HAS

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CHAPTER I.

"He watched idolatrous love its knee decline
To beauty, until passion made divine
That idol
He heard the loved one still the tale confess
Of immortality in his happiness."

OUR YOUTH. — JOHN EDMUND READE.

It was about a week or ten days after this, that Miss Marston, entering the sitting-room for her letters, found Mrs. Allardice reading one.

"From your father, dear Miss Marston. Mr. Marston talks of being here on Saturday next, and, at all events, to stay Sunday. He wants to see what has been done. — I hope he will be satisfied; but that young gentleman seems to me to have progressed rather slowly of late; however, it is no affair of mine."

"Certainly not."

"Have you seen the room, Miss Marston? I almost wonder you have been able to repress your curiosity so long; but I cannot but greatly approve of your so doing."

I went in last night, expecting to find our young gentleman hard at work — but what do you think he was about? correcting the perspective of a sketch Mademoiselle Fierville had been bringing to shew him. The young lady seems to have taken suddenly a marvellous passion for the arts of design.”

“Has she? I suppose the arts of design are to ensnare the young gentleman.”

“She is a dreadful coquette,” said Mrs. Allardice, sharply; “but she may spare herself the trouble in this instance. Mr. Du Chastel is not for her money, I can tell her that.”

“How do you know? — What could be more appropriate?”

“She, for him! — My dear Miss Marston, what are you thinking of? He, a gentleman by birth, education, manners; sprung from one of the noblest houses in France; and she! why probably she’s only the half-starved child of some milliner, thanks to her Parisian accent, sent over to try her fortune in England.”

“Gentleman by descent! Gentleman by education and manners! What signifies all that, when he is only a poor artist?”

“I am surprised to hear you speak in that manner, Miss Marston. I honour the prejudices of position, and there is nothing I dislike, or disapprove more, than the levelling ideas which are beginning to be the fashion of the present day — but really, there is a line to be

drawn, and a sense of proper dignity may degenerate into offensive pride. The littleness of pride I have often pointed out to you, which, resting only upon mere outward distinctions, and especially those of wealth, is blind to the elevation upon which intrinsic worth, founded upon high descent, must ever stand. Family and education make all equals, even though they are poor."

"Good Mrs. Allardice, you talk like a book. Nay, don't look angry. You know how my father, who is not the man in the world, least... Well, what shall I say? — proud of — puffed up with... Pooh! that would not be respectful — *sensible* of his wealth — you know, dear, how he has always valued these advantages in *you*."

"I have been happy to find in Mr. Marston so just an appreciation of things, and I could wish to see him imitated by his daughter..." sententiously.

"Would you? — well, you do. You know I set you miles above Fierville. Nay," good-humouredly patting her governess's cheek; "don't look cross, dear woman; you know I think you a thousand, thousand times right, though the perverse spirit that was in me would not let me own it just then."

And with that she went to her harpsichord, and rattled away half a hundred sprightly tunes, one gayer than the other. Her spirit seemed quite dancing within her.

"I am glad she is so delighted with the idea of

seeing her father so soon again," said Mrs. Allardice to herself, who, after all, was not a bad sort of woman.

* * * * *

Some time had now elapsed since the meeting in the saloon, and every day had seemed to take something from the restraint of Miss Marston's manners, and consequently, from the somewhat haughty reserve of Du Chastel: insensibly they fell first into general conversation, and thence into more individual conversation.

They were both so intelligent in this respect, so far beyond the other two, that the ice once broken, they seemed to fall together by a sort of natural instinct; not that they agreed in sentiment upon any one subject. Armand could not express an opinion but what it was almost certain to be taken up and disputed by Miss Marston — half in joke, half in earnest. It seemed as if she took quite a pleasure in provoking him to put himself forward, by attacking without mercy, and it would almost seem without discrimination, every principle that he held dear.

He was naturally of a serious and earnest tone of character, and found little amusement in these lively skirmishes between contending wits — undertaken without a pretence to conviction — merely for skirmishing sake. He had known the realities of life, young as he was, too well, not to feel irritated and impatient when

he heard those principles attacked, upon which his very existence seemed founded.

He was indeed too grave — would have been grave to stupidity, had it not been that he possessed such a fine impulsive feeling heart; he had not a particle of fun in him.

It would seem that Miss Marston's object was answered, when she had called him out. She appeared to take a good-natured, mischievous pleasure, in provoking him to speak, and to speak warmly — sometimes hastily — vehemently — angrily. *She* never lost her temper, but retreated before him, taking shelter against the force of his earnest and unanswerable reasonings, behind a thousand illogical conclusions, drawn from inadmissible premises; arguing in a circle like a child running round a table, so that it was impossible she could be caught.

He would look half vexed, half amused at these times.

He seemed really anxious to convince her — really and seriously desirous that this apparently ill-regulated understanding, these infinite imaginings and most wild principles, should be restrained into something like order.

But she was not to be brought to order.

A triumphant, indefinable joy would be dancing in her eyes, when he, with his gentle, manly, serious, yet tender voice — for it was all this — and he was all this in one — turning upon her those eyes so full of

light and truth, would begin in his earnest way — “But, my dear Miss Marston,” and strive to prove to her that she was wrong, and lay before her the evils which must inevitably arise, if ideas like hers, so subversive of all that had been accepted by the best and wisest of mankind, should ever prevail.

She would listen to him for a few moments, as if delighted with his eloquence, and half-persuaded by his reasonings; and certainly, at those moments, her face was something more than beautiful; but these brief fits of attention and candour were rare, were almost instantly shaken off, and the attack began again.

It is wonderful how intimacy advances in this kind of warfare, especially between a man and woman who have an esteem and friendly feeling for each other. The brief intervals of candour and submission to reason, are sufficient to compensate to the man for the unimaginable contradictions and absurdities in which the wild fancy of his fair antagonist revels. As for the woman, say what you will, she loves to be contradicted when she knows she ought to be contradicted. She loves to be schooled when she feels she deserves schooling — to be ruled when she knows she wants ruling. She is gifted with an infallible instinct — call it rather intuition — by which she discerns all this. And when she is thought perverse and self-willed, is often merely repeating the fault, for the sake of repeating the lesson.

Every evening, after conversations such as these,

Evelyn would go up to her room, feeling wiser — better. The pleasure, I suppose, the sweetest it was given to man here below, was becoming hers. Moral advancement, rapid and sensible to the soul. The first steps upon that path, which irradiated by the shining light, “tendeth more and more unto the perfect day.”

There was no occasion for anxiety upon her account now. Every cloud had vanished from that most expressive of countenances. There was a sort of halo of peace and joy around it; that joy which springs from full contentment in the most hidden chamber of the heart. A joy with which no stranger intermeddleth — in truth, which no stranger can divine.

Mrs. Allardice was pleased to see her charge looking so blythe and handsome against her father's return. Mademoiselle was pleased to observe the way in which she treated Mr. Du Chastel.

To be sure, she would have liked better that the old coldness and hauteur had been preserved; but this constant skirmishing, this raillery, this provoking contradiction, did almost as well.

So all seemed contented; and so Saturday arrived, the day Mr. Marston was to come.

* * * *

She was not quite herself the whole of that day — she seemed in a sort of flutter. Sometimes at her harpsichord striking a few notes — not playful cor-

rantos and *contre dances*, but a few of those tender and pathetic adagios of Corelli's, that in so small a space speak volumes to the soul; then she would get up, take her embroidery, but the needle soon dropped; and she would sit in deep thought for some time; then she would seem to recollect herself, would spring up hastily, and go to the window.

All at once she appeared to have taken her determination; she went up stairs without saying a word, fetched her hat and cloak, slid down again unobserved, passed through the window of the remote dining-room, and buried herself in the woods for several hours.

She made her way to a well-known open glade, or rather valley, covered with short grass and mossy turf, through which crept a little transparent but not babbling brook, huge trees, oaks and beeches, towered among the rough broken banks on either side; a hawk might now and then be seen soaring above, winging his way across the blue sky, into which the magnificent trees were soaring, and little birds crept and whispered among the tiny thickets beneath the branches; all else was quite still.

To this place she made her way.

Her first feeling was self-congratulation at having escaped notice; but she soon sank into a deep musing upon the subject that so intensely occupied her.

She was forming a resolution.

It was the first time in her young life that she had

felt herself called upon to seriously resolve as to any course of action. This was a most serious and perplexing one — doubtful, difficult, and upon which no human being could be consulted; and she was not yet sufficiently advanced in religion to lay doubt and difficulty before One ever-living friend, to entreat direction and a blessing, and to reap calmness, clearness of vision, and strength of purpose in return.

She relied entirely upon her own vigorous character, upon her simple, straightforward view of things, and her own rectitude of purpose.

She had pondered the subject long and with wonderful clearness and soundness for a girl of her age. She had weighed contradictions, and balanced objections. Her mind had been steadily making itself up; and if she escaped to this spot to enjoy an hour of perfect solitude this morning, it was because the crisis approached, and she was preparing herself to act. Act, that is to say, so far, at least, as to try her ground, and assure herself of how that stood, before coming to any further decision.

She showed a wonderful power of consideration in the way she had laid the subject before her, and examined it in all its bearings: in fact, she was a remarkably clever, sensible girl; and the wild way in which it pleased her so often to talk, only disguised that fact from the most superficial observers.

Armand Du Chastel was anything but a superficial observer.

Well, she walked in these Elysian fields, as this valley was named, for three hours, intending to stay there only one; and when she returned to the house, she contrived to glide up to her own dressing-room again unobserved.

Mr. Marston was not expected till late in the evening, so the party met at the four o'clock dinner as usual.

There was little conversation that day. Miss Marston was thoughtful; Armand was silent and pensive. Her face was serious, but peaceful and satisfied; over his there was a shade of melancholy, which had been lately increasing.

The two governesses had their own subjects for reflection. The arrival of Mr. Marston seemed to change the relations of everybody. It might prove a crisis in more affairs than one.

At tea, about seven o'clock, they met again. Supper was ordered at ten. Mr. Marston was expected to arrive about a quarter of an hour before that time.

At tea Miss Marston was fidgety.

There was a large basket filled with green-house and hot-house plants and flowers, standing in the centre window. The gardener had taken unusual pains with it, and yet she did not seem satisfied.

"My dear Miss Marston, it is really beautiful. It could not be better — Do be easy; I really do not see how it could be improved. Tell us, Mr. Du Chastel;

you are an undeniable authority upon this, as upon many other subjects — could it really be better?"

He looked up at it upon this.

It was, indeed, difficult to find a fault; the flowers were of the most splendid description, and arranged with that instinct for such things which often throws tastes more cultivated into despair.

"I must agree with you. To my eye, it is perfectly beautiful."

At one extremity of the basket hung a lovely creeping cereus, with its pendant green snakelike branches, covered with a perfect harvest of delicate pink flowers.

"Your eye deceives you, Mr. Du Chastel," said Evelyn; "and I will show you where the basket is not perfectly beautiful — but I will be candid enough to acknowledge, only change that single plant, and it will do."

"Which plant?" asked Mrs. Allardice.

"That creeping cereus upon the left hand. Do you not see it is a very shabby specimen, and ought to be changed for a better?"

"Do you think so?" asked Du Chastel. "It will be in full perfection to-morrow — quite covered with flowers. It is not in full bloom."

The others agreed in this.

But she was, as usual, not to be convinced. Nothing would satisfy her but she must have the pot changed. There was a splendid plant at this moment in full perfection in the green-house: she would have that in.

"I will send for the gardener."

"The gardeners are all gone from work by this time. Do, pray, be satisfied, my dear. Nothing can be better than that very individual flower" . . .

Mrs. Allardice kept repeating.

"I don't like it, and I won't have it," was the rather rude answer. And going up to the basket, "If the gardeners are gone home, which I suppose they are, I will carry it to the green-house myself, and change it."

"My dear Miss Marston, utterly impossible."

"Not so impossible as you may think;" and a pair of hands which might have been modelled for their extreme delicacy and beauty, plunged into the basket, and began to lift up the heavy flower-pot with considerable difficulty, breaking off a whole shower of pink-blossoms as they did so.

Armand had looked on half surprised, half, amused.

This sort of childish obstinacy was so in contrast with many charming qualities that were perpetually escaping, as it were, from under this veil of caprice and self-will which she chose to throw over them — but now he came forward.

"If Miss Marston really wishes to change the plant, it is easily done, if she will allow me to carry it for her to the green-house."

Her face was very red — but she had been tugging at the flower-pot. She stammered out:

"Will you — won't you — yes — pray do — thank

you — this is the way;" — and she was through the open window, and on her way to the 'green-house, in the twinkling of an eye.

Mademoiselle had a most delicate pair of sandals on, as I think they called them at that time, made of finest leather, of the most tender tint of blue, and curiously inlaid and embossed with different-coloured satins. They had lately arrived from Paris — Evelyn had that very evening persuaded her to wear them for the first time. To go out in these sandals over the gravel — or still worse, the damp grass — Evelyn well knew was a thing not to be thought of. As for Mrs. Allardice, neither shawl nor silk cloak was at hand; it seemed as if the genius of mischief had purposely put them out of the way; and without some covering of this sort, it was impossible for her to stir out after sunset.

Besides, there was time for nothing of all this. Evelyn was gone like a shot, and would be back before there would be time to follow her.

She did, indeed, walk fast, and he followed as he could the light silk dress which floated before him, and the foot-steps which seemed scarcely to touch the ground.

She was in the green-house before he reached it.

"Where must I put this down?"

"Oh, here — there — anywhere"

In a hurried voice, and her face all flushing.

"The plant I want is here;" — and she opened the door into a much more extensive conservatory within.

It was all hung over with pendant branches and dropping flowers — white, and scarlet, and purple, and planted with myrtles, oleanders, and orange trees.

She pressed onwards among them, pushing the branches hastily aside, till she reached the centre of the building, under festoons of large white and crimson flowers, that were hanging down like beautiful curtains, and surrounded by a thick green of myrtles, now in full bloom. Here she stopped, panting a little for breath; but it seemed as if she could not recover breath.

"You have walked too fast," he said; "will you not sit down?"

And he went and fetched a sort of imitative cushion of China, which served for a seat in this enchanted wilderness.

"Thank you."

She sat down — she looked down, and the colour of her cheek grew deeper and deeper — first a lovely pink, then rose, then crimson.

At last, with a violent effort, she raised her eyes and said:

"I wanted to say something to you."

"To me?"

With such an unaffected flush of delighted surprise! —

A little encouraged by this, she stumbled on.

"Do you remember one evening"

He stood wondering and waiting for something more.

"The evening you shewed me your pictures? but perhaps, you have forgotten all about it. . ."

"It would not be easy for me to do *that*," he answered, gravely.

Something in his manner seemed to give her fresh courage — the courage of desperation.

"You were displeased with me."

"*I* displeased! Miss Marston?"

"Because I persisted in asserting two things, what I believe — which I *know* to be true — that you would not know her again, if you were to see her — and that if you did recollect, you would not care for her."

He coloured, but was silent.

She went on as if she were resolved to dare everything.

"Because, I want to know — because, I *must* know — I *will* know . . . Is it possible that all this time? . . . Have you never — so near! . . . Have you never guessed — never suspected? . . . Not for one single moment? . . . Or is it true — too true — that seeing her you *will* not know — because she is not worthy . . . and you care for her no longer?"

His eyes now were as if they were darting fire.

Her face was perfectly crimsoned over as she almost frantically went on — "Because, because — if it

were Yes, yes! you saved my life! — you saved my life —”

“You! — Evelyn Marston!”

He was falling at her feet in a tumult of passion.

“Enough, enough,” she cried — hastily preventing him; “I understand you.”

Some one was now heard trying the hasp of the green-house door. She started — “There is the plant,” pointing to one upon a stand at a little distance. “Will you be so good as to take it, and say I went home through the orangery — will you?”

He looked at her passionately — mournfully.

“So soon to part — but not surely, now, for ever.”

* * * *

At a quarter to ten Mr. Marston had arrived, and had kissed his daughter upon the forehead, and had observed, with a little dissatisfaction to Mrs. Allardice, that her nose was rather red, and her face all colours; and had signified his wonder at what they had all been about. And he had also glanced into the saloon, and had expressed his satisfaction at what had been doing. Indeed, he was evidently delighted, but the young artist stammered and shook in a strange way.

Mr. Marston did not recollect that he had been so nervously shy when he had seen him in London.

However, nervous or not, he was unquestionably a man of talents; and Mr. Marston, not a little pleased with the deferential timidity which he took his manner to express, as well as with the beauty of his drawing-room walls, said all sorts of civil things.

For he was one of those pompous men who take a great delight in raising up prostrate merit; and though certainly Du Chastel's attitude was not that of merit prostrated before wealth and consequence; yet there was, as I have said, a nervous hurry about him, which flattered Mr. Marston considerably — he attributing it to the influence of his august presence.

After the saloon had been looked into, so far as the imperfect light of a couple of wax candles, carried by a footman, would permit, Mr. Marston proposed once more adjourning to the supper room. And to supper they all sat down.

Evelyn by her father, in hopes to conceal her red nose; but she could not succeed. He kept turning round, and constantly remarking upon it, with that mixture of rudeness and ill-humour which some fathers think their privilege in their own families.

He was excessively disappointed and vexed at her looks, for Mrs. Allardice had been sending most flourishing accounts of her improvement in beauty; and he had, besides, reasons of his own for being more than usually solicitous upon the subject. A subject upon which he was ordinarily more solicitous than the majority of

fathers are; for among his other selfishnesses and faults, he nourished a most inordinate and ridiculous pride in the beauty of his daughter — looking upon it, justly enough, as a distinction not to be purchased by wealth — and frequently boasting of it to a rich crony of his, who rejoiced in the possession of seven daughters, one more ugly than the other.

Poor Mrs. Allardice was sadly mortified, and could not forgive herself for her weakness in letting Miss Marston indulge her whim and go out that evening just as the dew was falling. She saw she had taken cold, but she dared not breathe the suspicion of such a thing before Mr. Marston, who never forgave any one for being out of order.

Mademoiselle, in the meantime, having no responsibility to share upon the matter of Miss Marston's looks, sat eyeing the master of the family with a little malicious satisfaction at seeing him vexed, and not with her. And then she glanced at the young painter, and observing that he looked rather particularly ill at ease, began to fancy the old monster had been treating him with some of his habitual *grossiereté*; so her tender heart was all alive, and she applied herself, but with due discretion, and that tact which no woman better understood, to the amiable task of endeavouring to soften the mortification she believed he was feeling. But Du Chastel seemed as much at cross purposes as the rest

of the world; and did not appear to remark her attentions, or care in the least what she said or did.

So by and by Mademoiselle became as grumpy as the rest.

And altogether, I think this was as silent and sulky a family re-union, as ever was assembled after an absence of a month or two. But Mr. Marston, whenever he returned home, had a way with him of making everybody so uncomfortable, before he had been five minutes in the house, that we cannot wonder at the satisfaction Mrs. Allardice felt, at what one should have thought the no very uncommon circumstance of his daughter being glad to see him.

CHAPTER II.

"Oh! what a deal of scorn looks beautiful,
In the contempt and anger of her brow —"

SHAKESPEARE.

THE next morning was given in the first place to the more detailed examination of what had been done in the saloon.

Mr. Marston insisted upon his daughter accompanying him to admire and criticise — they were followed by the young man. Evelyn would have excused herself, but her father impatiently and half-angrily reproached her for the indifference she showed to that, in which he took so much interest — wondering that she, who had

so much taste in most things, should be so careless about decorative painting.

So she was obliged to come, and she followed her father, looking conscious and embarrassed; but he was far too much engrossed in the important business of his drawing-room walls, to observe anything unusual about his daughter. If it had not been so, he could scarcely have helped remarking the change which had taken place, from the gay, saucy, petulance of her usual manner, to the silence, the awkwardness, the something, almost of humility, in its softness now.

Mr. Marston seemed dazzled with the splendour of the effect when the door was thrown open, and the bay window lighted up by a brilliant sun; and the rich magnificence of the decorations upon the walls, now considerably more advanced than when he saw them last, were displayed.

He was more than pleased, and could scarcely believe that the young untried artist whom he had patronised, could have succeeded so well.

He kept walking up and down the room, expressing the pleasure he felt, with a warmth very unusual with him; whilst the two young people stood at a little distance from each other, trembling and shaking, and every moment changing colour.

"Really I must say, Mr. Du Chastel, that this work does you amazing credit. I had no idea, when my friend Pouncet advised me to apply to you, what a gem

we were going to bring to light. I congratulate myself, and I congratulate you — *you*, my young friend, more especially," going up and shaking him heartily by the hand. "I look upon your fortune as made. With talents such as yours, and an opening such as it has been my good luck to be the means of affording you, you may regard yourself as a made man — a made man, sir — whether you continue a decorative painter, or aspire to the higher walks. There is nothing in your profession, whether as regards money or reputation, which I do not look upon you as certain of obtaining. I congratulate you, sir — I congratulate you."

The countenance of Du Chastel changed its expression at every sentence thus uttered; but every change was a painful one — disgust, mortification, offended pride — and a mournful glance to one especial part of the room.

He was feeling the full force of that truth — that there is nothing which can be more humiliating, under some circumstances, than praise.

To be thus praised! and before her!

He could have bit his lip through with rage and vexation.

She standing there all the time!

Whilst the measureless breadth, the fathomless depth of the abyss which separated them, was thus, as it were, being realized before her.

He had cast one glance that way — but he could

not see her face. She was standing a little turned from him, with her head somewhat bent down, as if listening — “drinking in every word,” as he bitterly thought — ashamed and humbled for him — but far, far more for herself.

But Mr. Marston kept persisting, with the most perfect self-complacency, in offering what he thought the encouragement due to poverty and talent united.

Minds that want delicacy, have no conception of the peculiar delicacy needed in offering praise. They thrust it in the face, as a gross-minded person offers his money, without a conception that two such good things can ever be offensive.

“Fine! wonderfully fine! Where do you artists contrive to pick up all these things? — Strong creative faculty, indeed! My friend Pouncet will be very well pleased, I can assure you; and we shall take care your time shall not hang heavy upon your hands, young gentleman — You must raise your terms.....”

But at that, Evelyn turned sharply round, and crossing the room, laid hold of her father’s arm.

“Papa, do you know it is the son of the Count Du Chastel?”

“Know!” said the father, shaking her hand off; “know! I don’t know much about foreign Counts. The continent swarms with them. No, I know nothing of foreign Counts — nor much of English Counts either, for that matter.”

This was too much for Armand. He had borne the intolerable praise like a martyr, though smarting in every nerve; but at this unlooked-for interference, all the blood seemed to rush to his heart. The water sprang to his eyes; and turning hastily away, he pretended to busy himself with a portfolio of sketches, which he had, with or without design, hastily let fall upon a table covered with his painting materials.

"Bless me! — I hope no mischief. But let me see; let me have a look, young man. Are these the drawings — the first crude ideas of what was afterwards so happily carried out? Nay — nay — no false modesty! Let us have a look — let us have a look!"

Du Chastel resigned the portfolio to his inspection; holding one leaf of it, whilst Mr. Marston turned over sheet after sheet of drawing paper, covered with rough sketches.

One look — intended for grateful acknowledgment, but which was marvellously like passionate adoration — he threw up to Evelyn. It was all he would allow himself — more than he had intended to allow himself — but it made her feel very happy.

He had laid down a most rigid rule of conduct, during the few days that he must inevitably be obliged to stay to complete his undertaking.

He felt called upon by every feeling of honour to repress sentiments which the relations in which they stood, rendered it worse than vain to indulge.

He might as well, he felt, love some bright, particular star.

And the injury he would be inflicting upon her, by encouraging such thoughts — even if the idea had not been absolute madness — was sufficient to steel him against the sore temptation.

Yet he could not regret the explanation that had taken place between them. That was a source of felicity; a mine of inestimable wealth, of which nothing could deprive him.

That she could have loved him, had his fallen fortunes not rendered such an idea a dream of the wildest insanity, was enough for a life.

It would be his life, at least, he felt.

* * * * *

“Really, my dear . . .” began Mr. Marston to his daughter, as, the inspection of the saloon being at last finished, the workman was left to his pencil, and they were strolling together by the side of the lake, watching a majestic pair of swans, which, followed by their cygnets, sailed slowly up, shaking out their snow-white feathers, reflected in the water — both swan and shadow.

“Beautiful things those swans, by the by. I am glad I bought them. Three pair we have. That’s not enough — but we must get more. But really, my dear, I am very much pleased with what that young fellow has done. ’Pon my credit, I did not say one word in

his praise that I did not think most richly deserved. One usually exaggerates a little with poets, painters, actors, and that sort of gentry; but I give you my word, I did not utter a syllable I did not think. — The room is wonderfully well done, and so Pouncet will say when he comes. — I expect him here in a day or two. I look upon the young chap's fortune as made."

"So you said before — so you took the liberty of saying to his face;" her cheek flushing with anger. "You don't seem the least to know who Mr. Du Chastel is, papa, when you treat him like I don't know what. He is a gentleman born and bred."

"Stuff! What romance have you got into your head? I know who he is, rather better than you do, I take it, Miss Marston. He's the son of Du Chastel, once a master weaver in Spital Fields."

"He is a descendant of the Marquis Du Chastel, who was driven from France for his religion, son of the Count Du Chastel, who suffered so terribly for his he is....."

"French refugees, eh? That *does* mend the matter — a parcel of French Counts and Marquises in rags — what do we know? All foreigners are Counts, or Chevaliers — or I don't know what. All I *do* know is, that the father of this lad was a master weaver in Spital Fields — that he made a most insane speculation for some romantic notion or other, and was ruined. The only thing that makes me believe he was a Count at all,

is that he made such a mess of business. These fine gentry are sure to do that, when they meddle with what they don't understand, and what it requires a little good English sense *to* understand."

"Yes, I know," she said disdainfully. "He was pious, generous, and compassionate.... Such things are very much out of their place in trade."

"What do you mean by that?" turning sharply round. "Let me hear you say that again."

"I *would* say it again — if..."

"If what? pray."

"If you could bear it."

"I bear it. As if I cared. And yet I do care. I don't know what's come to you, Evelyn. You are quite an altered creature — Nothing to say for yourself, but just one or two things, which, give me leave to say, Miss Marston, I think might have been as well not said."

"I beg your pardon, papa, if I was rude ... but ... however it is no use talking of it. I believe we *must* see things differently."

"Why, possibly so — A silly, pert girl, hardly of age, and a man who has lived fifty years in the world, usually *do* see things somewhat differently. One learns what stars and garters are worth, for one thing; or rather what a set of empty titles, with neither stars nor garters belonging to them, are worth in the world. But if you want to befriend the poor young fellow, take my advice,

Evelyn. Don't encourage him to puff himself up with nonsense of this sort. He is a very pretty artist, and if he sticks to it, he'll get on very well, believe me; but if he's blown up with the silly pride of his birth, forsooth! a French refugee, and please you! ... Why, it's what nobody but a romantic girl like yourself would care a button for, and it's best he should be made aware of the fact, if he has not already found it out. — Who'll bear to have that sort of thing thrust into their faces by a poor beggarly fellow with hardly a coat to his back? The man who pays is the prince for me — and so this young genius will soon find, if he tries to set himself up for something more than he is — namely, the very humble servant of any one who will be good enough to employ him."

She made no answer. She could not, and she dared not if she could. Her whole proud, warm heart was running over with indignation — her cheeks were crimson. It was all she could do to keep the tears from starting into her eyes.

She turned away.

"Oh! but," said her heart, "they may talk as they will. They may scorn him; but they shall not teach me to scorn him, though I know what an infectious thing scorn is. They may look upon him with contempt — and I know how easy it is to learn to look with contempt on others — They may despise this noble,

brave, generous, self-sacrifice; this devotion to God; this love for man

"I know how easy all this is; for I have but just learned to feel things differently. They may set no value upon anything but riches, and power, and luxury, and splendour.

"Oh, I know it. I used to be just so myself; but it will not be so again with me.

"No. I am learning — I think I am beginning to understand what life really is — and that it is not money, and fine houses, and fine clothes and pride, and selfishness, but that it is quite quite a different thing.

"The choice of Hercules!

"Has not every one once in their lives to make that choice?

"Well, then, I have made it.

"I care not what they may think or say. They may ridicule me as romantic; they may abuse me as absurd; they may rail at my obstinacy and folly; but my choice is made.

"He shall not be the mark for contemptuous compassion, insolent patronage, and praise.

"He shall be an independent man.

"He loves me. He tries to hide it; but I know he does love me, and I can — oh, thank, thank Heaven for it! — I can raise him, deliver him from this insupportable dependence, for his own and his parents' bread.

"Replace them where they once were.

"And I *will*! He loves me. He may try to hide it, dear, honourable fellow; but I know he does — and I will.

"What can I do better with what it has pleased heaven in its infinite — oh, its undeserved goodness — to give me, than employ it in this way.

"And make us all happy. Oh, so happy! and I *will*.

"He loves me — I see it. I know it, dear, honourable fellow, and I *will*."

So she kept talking to herself within her own mind, strengthening a resolution which had long been taken, by every feeling thus awakened, by her father's pride and insolence.

As for any difficulty regarding that father, it seemed that she troubled herself little upon the subject. Most daughters, one would suppose, would, at least, have felt some scruple at thus settling their future without the slightest reference to what their father's wishes and prejudices might be. But a want of filial piety is among the first and the most certain attendants upon an imperfect education, founded upon no right moral principle, as hers had been.

She had been accustomed to independence from having been left so much to herself. Her father had never cultivated the domestic ties. She felt little respect and not much love for him. He was good-natured and profuse in his indulgences; but this excited but small

gratitude. Where money was so abundant, the bestowing of it occasioned little feeling of any sort; it came as a matter of course. The insolent roughness of the purse-proud man's ways disgusted her; his manner of treating herself excited little affection. She had indeed got into that fatal habit too common with many children, and which exercises the most injurious influence upon their hearts — that of viewing her father and all that he said and did, with a critical, disparaging sort of eye, which she would have felt to be unjust as regarded other persons.

Dangerous fault. The destruction of all domestic piety.

It is so easy for triumphant youth to look down contemptuously upon age; for ignorance to cavil at what it has no experience of; for imagination to find occasion for fault-finding in that of which it knows little.

"Honour thy father and thy mother," is one of the foundation commandments of Him, who knew what was in man and woman well. The fatal inclination of youth, to exaggerate the defects and deformities of age.

Honour them. Yes! honour them — blindly — in obedience, on principle; or you will find love will cool when reverence ceases. They are mortal, like yourselves, those parents God has given you, and full of blemishes and faults; deformed by the stains and furrows left by an imperfect life. Yet honour them; for so hath their Maker and yours commanded. Scorn not their

blemishes; turn away the eyes from them; hide them; hide their faults from your most secret thought.

But of all the relations of domestic life, this one of parent and child is that which most requires to be founded on moral and religious principle and training.

And Evelyn, wild, untutored young creature of the wilderness, had received no such training.

And accordingly she troubled herself not in the least, whether her father would be pleased or not with the plan upon which she had determined.

She had, in most of the little contests which had, on various occasions, arisen between them, found her will stronger than his; for her character was far more lofty and high-spirited, and that sort of loftiness of spirit triumphs in the long run over that selfishness of will and obstinacy in which his strength lay.

So, neither troubled with scruples, nor perplexed with fears, Evelyn indulged herself in every sort of pleasant, triumphant, and, we may add, generous anticipation. For if she felt certain of securing her own happiness, and something of the selfishness mingled with her other feelings, which I suppose attends every strong attachment, though selfishness never seems to me the right word for it — the object which she most ardently pursued, was certainly Du Chastel's happiness. His release from a situation in opposition with his early claims and habits, and attended with circumstances so peculiarly mortifying. Add to which, she looked forward

with a sort of enthusiastic delight to the idea of being the means to restore his father — the man she had learned so to venerate — to some portion of his former prosperity.

For though Miss Marston seems to have been sadly wanting in respect to her own father, — words would fail to describe the intense reverence, the lowly, humble sense, of her own moral inferiority, with which she regarded the father of the man she loved. He was the model, to her warm imagination, of everything that can ennoble, purify, and adorn, a human being.

* * * *

But while Evelyn thus indulged herself in those blissful anticipations which belong to a sincere and most well-placed love, Armand was far from feeling equally self-satisfied, either with his present position, or his future prospects.

His sense of honour was chivalric — his sense of duty strong — the proud delicacy of his sentiments carried to the highest pitch.

And neither sense of honour, sense of duty, nor pride and delicacy, were satisfied at the position in which he was now standing.

The passion which Miss Marston had inspired, had been a secret even to himself, till the revelation she had made, and far more the manner of her making it,

had disclosed the truth in one irrepressible — almost agony of rapture.

All that had lain concealed from his consciousness, though imperceptibly gaining strength every day, had burst suddenly to life, as if by an electric flash. He felt that he loved — and the intensity of the passion, inspired by such an object long secretly adored by a nature such as his, was almost fearful. As yet, he was master enough of himself to adopt the course which honour and principle commanded; but he felt that but a very little was wanting, and all this self-mastery would be lost.

He began to understand what was meant by being the slave of passion — to comprehend what Antony must have felt when he lost the world for a woman.... For this woman *he* would have been content to lose the world.

But it was not he that would lose it.

A man who loves, thinks all the treasures of creation too little to lavish upon — to adorn and delight his idol. Nothing is too good, fair, high, for her. He would place crowns upon her brows, enshrine her in precious things — cover her with his gifts, shield her from possible sorrow, pain, or hardship — from the very winds of heaven, lest they should visit her cheek too roughly.

But what man of generous or delicate feeling can bear to bring her down — to abase her? To be the

means of exposing her to every species of privation and conventional degradation? That thought it was which gave Armand a courage he might otherwise have wanted.

He made up his mind to fly.

To continue an inmate of Mr. Marston's house, after what had passed, and Mr. Marston totally unconscious of it, he felt to be inconsistent with his ideas of honour. Situated as he was, to give the slightest hint of the truth, would have been equally dishonourable. It would have been an act of the most unmanly treachery to the high-spirited, generous creature who had placed herself in his power.

The ordinary proceedings open to a man of equal position in life, were impossible for him. Even to profess a passion, under the cruel circumstances in which he stood, he felt was but to degrade the object of it: between them there *could* be, there *must* be nothing.

Yet to go on living in the house, allowed to make one at every family meal, admitted into all the easy familiarities of a domestic circle in a secluded country home! — To accept from Mr. Marston the cordial hospitality with which, in spite of his natural insolence, he seemed inclined to treat him, was a species of deceit and meanness, of which he felt himself utterly incapable, even for a day.

Yes, he must go — and instantly. Before it was too late — whilst yet flight was in his power.

Instantly.

He started up — To deliberate was to be lost.

Mr. Marston was still walking by the side of the water, where his daughter had left him, engaged in agreeable ruminations upon the bright prospects around and before him; perfectly unconscious of the heavy black cloud that hung threatening in his horizon. The man whose soul was "this night required of him," could not have placed more unthinking confidence in the stability of the future, as regarded the continued possession of all those things which he most valued — or be more thunderstruck and astonished when summoned to his account, than Mr. Marston would have been.

His fortune was increasing rapidly — from plentiful it was becoming enormous. His daughter was beautiful, clever, and high-spirited; and prospects for her were just opening, which pleased him in every respect. To these more important subjects for self-congratulations, may be added, that his place was looking beautiful, — that his swans, upon which he set much value, were multiplying — that his peacocks, which he almost equally took pride in, filled his trees as they used to do at Stowe — and last, though not least, that the young artist he had selected, had done wonderfully well by his saloon.

He was just now planning, when the above commission was executed, that he would employ young Du Chastel to paint the ceiling of, and otherwise adorn his

hall. He thought at present that it looked rather cold and bare, and formed no suitable introduction to the richness and elegance of his favourite chamber.

So thus he walked, and thus he mused, on investments, on matrimonial alliances, on swans, peacocks, saloons, and painted ceilings.

When his meditations were interrupted by the approach of the very young gentleman upon whom his thoughts were just at that moment dwelling; who, with considerable agitation of manner, which he in vain endeavoured to suppress, begged for a few minutes' audience.

"Quite at your service, sir; — but what's the matter now?"

"Only ... that something ... unexpected ... something quite unexpected ... had rendered it necessary that he should immediately return to London."

"Sir!"

"I am extremely sorry — I deeply regret the necessity of leaving, though there is but a small portion of my undertaking unfinished; but the occasion will brook no delay — I have no choice."

"It is my impression, sir, that you had engaged to finish my affair before you undertook any other commission," said Mr. Marston, coldly.

"I did. But who can answer for the future? Who can tell what a day ..."

"Sir, I don't pretend to say who can do this or who

can do that. One thing I know — when people have made an engagement, they are bound to keep it; and it is not my present intention to release you from yours."

"The circumstances which render it imperative with me to request it are such as it is impossible for me to explain ... All I can beg of Mr. Marston is, to believe that if he could be made acquainted with them, he would feel that I was justified in persisting. I beg you to pardon me; but I must — must leave you for London this evening."

"Upon my word, you are the coolest young gentleman it has often been my lot to meet with — Do you please to recollect what passed between us upon the subject of the engagement? ... I declined the ceremony of a paper, like a simpleton as I was, it seems. I trusted to your word; I thought that would be enough for a man of honour; I think I have a right to hold you to it — and I do."

Armand looked excessively distressed.

"You must not — you must not, indeed, sir. You must let me go."

"Is your father dead or dying?"

"He is quite well. Why do you ask?"

"Your mother, then?"

"Much as usual."

"Any money in jeopardy?"

Armand, with a slight smile — “Not much of that.”

“I thought as much. — Well, then, sir, as neither father, mother, nor purse are in question, I take leave to say that I can admit no other excuse as sufficient justification of the breach of an engagement such as ours ... and I beg your pardon, young man, but I repeat that I hold you to it. How long will it take you to finish what you are about?”

“A week or ten days.”

“Then a week or ten days, if you please, you remain here. After that, you are, of course, at liberty. — I had other plans for you; but in consequence of what I must think to be most unhandsome and ungentleman-like behaviour, all relations of this sort between us are at an end. I take the liberty to call things by their right names ... you must excuse me, I am a man who loves to speak out.”

Armand could only bow in silence.

“At your age,” Mr. Marston, who was getting very angry, went on, “I know only two reasons besides those I have named for conduct so indefensible as yours; — one is, the offer of a better engagement; but” — as Du Chastel’s eye began to flash, he quietly added — “of that I cannot suspect you ... the only remaining one is, some love business” — and seeing Armand colour — “I don’t wish to pry into secrets, young man, but take this from me — if you suffer such nonsense to interfere

with the honourable fulfilment of your professional engagements, it is all up with you. You have already lost one powerful friend, who might have been of some not contemptible service in forwarding your views. Take my advice — don't do the same when you are so fortunate as to find another."

And he walked on, whistling to his swans, and emptying his pocket of the bread he had brought for them.

CHAPTER III.

"..... As in raging sea

Tost up and down, together crowded drove

..... blowing adverse mountains of ice,

That stop th' imagin'd way —"

MILTON.

It was in a confusion of mingled feelings that Armand returned to his labours.

Pain, vexation, above all, the mortifying sense of his inferiority in position, which the manner of this rude man forced upon him with fresh strength, was mingled with an ecstasy of happiness, which it seemed as if he scarcely knew how to bear.

He felt the absurdity, the folly, the insanity of it; but his heart was bounding, and his head was reeling with rapture.

It was impossible, thus constrained, to do otherwise than complete his engagement; all that conscience could

now in equity demand, was to work as indefatigably as he could, and abridge, as far as in him lay, the days of ecstatic danger.

But that was not, for the present, so easy; his hand shook, his eyes dazzled; to work was impossible. He could only rush out into the air, and endeavour to cool his temples and tranquillize his nerves.

In the meantime, Mr. Marston returned to the house and entered the saloon, expecting to find his artist busily engaged as usual. He was vexed and surprised to find the room empty, the idle brushes thrown about as if hastily flung down, and the young gentleman departed.

He felt no apprehension that he had really taken his leave for good; after what had passed, he felt that could not be; but he was impatient to get the thing completed, and his ill-humour at finding matters in their present state, was, after all, not very unnatural, all things considered.

However, the effect of the morning's transactions had been entirely to change Mr. Marston's sentiments with regard to Du Chastel, for whom he had begun to feel all a patron's partiality — all that liking which natures such as his entertain for those they have had the pleasure of laying under an obligation — was gone.

Much offended at the contradiction he had met with, vexed at the destruction of his schemes of patronage

and painted ceilings, he took a thorough disgust to the young man, who had presumed to have a want or an intention inconsistent with his wishes; and going out of the room in search of some one to whom he could vent his displeasure, he made his way to his daughter's boudoir, after having looked for her in vain in the usual sitting-room.

"There's a bit of a tortoise-shell cabinet I stumbled upon the other evening, for you; where will you put it?" as he opened the door.

She was sitting at the end of her couch, close by the window, her face glued to the panes, looking out, and in such deep thought that she started violently as he opened the door.

"How you frightened me!" she said, rather crossly.

"Oh! — that's all the welcome you have to give me," said he, coming in and sitting down. "Then I may as well take my tortoise-shell nonsense back again."

"Oh, thank you! I thank you very much. Only you startled me so."

"Well, and if I did, it need not make you so crabbed, fair lady. — I did not come up here to be scolded, but to scold ... not you, child; but I have been, just now, confoundedly vexed, Evelyn. That rascally young fellow down there below — what *do* you think he has been having the impudence to propose? Just, without

saying with your leave, or by your leave, quietly to take himself away; leaving the saloon in the lurch, half finished, and going nobody knows where."

"Take himself away!" starting up. "Going!"

"You may well be surprised. Did you ever hear of such a proceeding?"

"Take himself away! He did not say he was going... When?"

"This very night."

She sat down upon the sofa, speechless.

"You may well be astonished. And when he was under as solemn an engagement as could be made in words," Mr. Marston went on, with increasing anger; "very honourable conduct in this gentleman-born of yours, Miss Marston; don't you think so?"

"It was his own proposal? —"

"To be sure it was — not very likely to be mine — a young scoundrel! and no reason given. Father well, mother well, money all right — I told him I wouldn't believe it was for the sake of a better engagement, that he preferred leaving us so suddenly in the lurch — a love affair, ten to one. Preposterous nonsense! and so I made bold to tell him."

"You did! — Good heavens! What could he, — what did he say?"

"Nothing whatever, but looked mighty nervous — so I suppose it was true."

"And he is going?" ...

“Nay, you need not look so deplorable, even if he was going — but he’s not going. You don’t think I would be such a Miss Molly as to allow that?”

She was silent, for to speak was becoming impossible.

“So I told him I held him to his engagement. It will only, after all, take him a week or ten days to complete it, if he will work hard. But done it shall and must be before the end of this month. And now — will you believe it? He left me, and went, as I thought, back to his work. — But I have just been in and found the room empty, and the paints and brushes all tossed about, and my young man run away, nobody knows where, like a truant school-boy.”

“Perhaps he’s really gone,” in a broken voice. “No, no, he could not, and would not bear it — who would? who would?” This last to herself.

“How oddly you speak, child! — You are still more put out than I am; and yet I profess to you, I think I never felt more inclined to box a fellow’s ears in my life.”

“How *you* speak! how contemptuously *you* speak! — If he is gone,” said she, bitterly, “it is the insolence he has met with which has driven him away — I told you he was not made for it, and would not bear it.”

“Insolence! I like that! I wonder who was insolent? — He to throw his engagement in my face, or I to tell him what I thought about it? But your father is always in the wrong, Miss Marston — I know that.”

"Oh, no! oh, no! Papa, I beg your pardon — I beg your pardon. I didn't mean — I'm very sorry."

"Yes. It's easy to beg pardon, and say one's sorry; but people should take care how they speak. It's easier to wound by foul words, than to heal by soft speeches."

Thus it was ever, when her heart was overflowing, full of candour and self-reproach, that he would check it.

She said not a word more.

— She turned and looked out. And oh! how did her heart bound with sudden joy, as she saw a figure cross the lawn and re-enter the house by the bay windows of the saloon.

Mr. Marston remained some little time — he was deeply wounded at his daughter's manner. Every parent, even the roughest, has that in his heart which no child, till a parent herself, can understand. And he was too much hurt at first to receive her submission as it deserved.

He seemed to hope she would say something more. If she had, he would have taken it more graciously; but she was not as yet, one to persevere against discouragement; she was sullen, and would make no further concession.

So at last he got up and went away, feeling much more sore and sad than she had the least idea of. Had she in the least suspected his feelings, she would have been in his arms, or at his feet.

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Forced to remain, all Armand could now do was to avoid Evelyn as much as, without absolute rudeness, was possible. He had spent the time whilst he was rambling in the woods, in making resolutions to do what honour, according to his view of the case, required.

But he could not resist her upbraiding eye.

He had begun by avoiding her as much as could be done in every way; but there was something in that mournful, inquiring, anxious face, — in that sorrowful, reproaching expression, that it was not in human nature to resist.

They happened to be standing near the bookcase one evening: Mr. Marston was dozing in his chair, the two governesses finishing some work at the table. Evelyn was trying to drag a heavy book from one of the shelves, and in common civility he could not help offering to assist her.

"Thank you — never mind, I can do it myself;" but he persisted; his hands were trembling violently. She looked up into his face — every feature was working with emotion.

"And you would have gone away?" in a low, gentle, broken voice. To him... oh! how infinitely touching!

"Was I not right? There are cases... when one must do right, and die."

"Die!" shaking her head. "You are not very likely to die — words of course — words of course?"

"I don't know — take it as you will. All I know," in a tone that could not be mistaken, "all I *do* know is, that if there be mercy above, I *shall* die."

"Oh! don't say so!"

"When a man," he went on, passionately, "sees all that is precious in existence at his very lip, and has with his own hand to dash the cup away — when the very intensity of his love is the measure of his duty — when, like Virginius, he has to strike with his own hand, and save from execration the being who is everything on earth to him; — it is best he should die — there is nothing left but to die. But I shall not die, Evelyn — I shall not die."

"No, live," she said, tremblingly and hurriedly. "Live for me!"

"Ah!"

* * * *

In about ten days after this, by labouring indefatigably, Du Chastel had completed his task, and had taken his departure; Mr. Marston appearing at last as impatient to get rid of him, as he had been obstinate in detaining him. Not, however, that he had the slightest suspicion in the world how things stood; he was too much absorbed in his own schemes to be alive to what was going on around him.

He had resolved to get the house clear before he broached the subject upon his mind; for he found the young artist, owing to his own arrangements, making so entirely one of the family party, that, as he was about to go so soon, he thought he might as well have the coast clear before opening upon a subject with his daughter which he was rather uncertain how she would at first receive.

So it was not till the morning after Du Chastel was gone, that Mr. Marston formally invited Evelyn to take a walk with him, as he had something to say to her.

She coloured a little at this; but glancing at his face, saw such an evident absence of the slightest suspicion of that with which her own thoughts were filled, that she went cheerfully up to fetch her hat, determining, as she went, that if any opportunity should in the course of their conversation occur for trying the ground a little with respect to the grand project of her life, not to let it pass. Whatever she did, however, she resolved to proceed with the utmost caution, gentleness, and prudence, and, above all things, not to provoke her father by any heat or violence; faults in which she was beginning to be aware that she had much too often indulged.

There was something in Armand's manner as regarded his parents, which had occasioned this return upon herself. She could not help feeling how shocked, nay, dis-

gusted, he would be, with his high and tender ideas of filial duty, were he ever to overhear the dialogues that too often passed between herself and Mr. Marston, and more especially at her share of them.

She had been trying to amend, and she had found the comfort of it. Mr. Marston did not particularly investigate matters of this description; but, some way or other, he found the communication with his daughter more pleasant than usual, and as she became more amiable and gentle, he became more polite and considerate.

So they set forward together in high good humour, equally unsuspecting of the subjects that were occupying their several thoughts.

CHAPTER IV.

THEY did not exchange many sentences at first.

Slight remarks upon the beauty of the day, upon the colour of the water, upon the swans, the walks, the trees, and so on, was all that passed between them. Both were full of their own ideas, and the ideas of each seemed equally agreeable.

Mr. Marston's face had a more than usual air of complacency upon it, and something of that expression, which betrays a little secret source of amusement; Evelyn's countenance was really charming.

So much sensibility, so much generous sincerity, so much genuine purity of happiness! It beamed like that of an angel — for in truth her heart was overflowing with good and loving feelings.

To make her lover happy; — to bestow upon him herself — and she understood well by this time the value of that gift in his eyes — but more to have the supreme, the inappreciable privilege of with herself bringing the means not only of an easy independence to the man she loved, but that which she knew he would value ten thousand times more than any personal enjoyment — the power of benefitting his father and mother — was the prospect so full of enchantment before her.

She felt better worth for her felicity, and she was better worth.

She was beginning to taste that purest of joys, the living out of herself, and for others. That expansion — that growth of the heart, which is the most heavenly, perhaps, of all sensations — she was feeling what true love does for us all; *true* love, mind I say, for there are many counterfeits abroad.

The fresh wind blew back her curls, and gave additional freshness to that animated face of hers, and her steps were as light and elastic as those of a happy child.

Her father had turned round and was looking at her with an admiring pleasure, which *he* even had never felt before to the same extent.

At last they left the water-side, and entered a broad, shady walk, leading to the Elysian fields. Then he suddenly stopped and said, —

“Whither so fast, fair lady? We are quiet enough here. — Why, Evelyn, I never saw thee looking so handsome in my life — handsome as you are! What is come over thee, my lass?”

She stopped, and laughed, and coloured.

“Do I look handsome? — I am glad — I particularly want to please my papa. . . . That’s what makes me look handsome, I suppose.”

“Ah, you hussey! The way to please a foolish father is to look handsome, think ye? There are better ways than that. — What do you say to being ready to do as he asks you, eh, rebel?”

“That must a little depend upon the nature of the thing he asks,” in a caressing tone; “but papa knows how glad I am to please him.”

“Not too much of that, young ‘Rights of Women;’ I’ve heard a little too much of that nonsense, now and then, in my house, may be — but you’re a good girl in the main, Evelyn, and you grow monstrous handsome, that’s a fact.”

“I wish he would not always be talking of one’s looks,” Evelyn said, rather pettishly, to herself. But she was improving. She kept it to herself, and only laughed a little impatiently.

“And I am beginning to think,” he went on, “that

it is high time all these fine things should no longer be lost down here. Stay — you've never been in London but once, I think?"

"Never but that once, and I had no reason to wish to go there in a hurry again. You remember what a long, horrid illness I had after that accident ... but do you know, papa," coming up to him stealthily, and speaking in a low, timid voice, "I have found out who it was that saved my life?"

"Have you? I knew it all along."

"You did! And you could!" ...

"Really I had forgotten all about it."

Her countenance fell, and she drew back a little behind him. Her very fingers were tingling with her impatience to give vent to the feelings that were boiling up in her heart. The fire was indeed kindled, but she constrained herself. She had resolved to be gentle, and preserve her self-command.

Her father went on, as if this little interruption had not interested him in the least.

"As I was saying, it is high time you should see a little more of the great world, and be seen by it, my fair lady; and, as I have not much time — nor, to say truth, over-much inclination for carrying you about myself — why, I have been thinking the best thing I can do, will be to delegate the affair to some one, who will be very well pleased to — as he will be rather well paid for — undertaking it."

She came up to him again at this.

"Dear papa! what can you be thinking of? I am sure I have not the least wish to see more of the great world, as people call it — I don't expect, and I don't want, and I don't intend, ever to belong to it — I am perfectly content to live retired as I do now. I like it far the best of any mode of life."

"Spoken like a book. And as you have made experience of such a variety of modes of life, of course no one more competent to give a sound opinion upon the subject. And so, if we are to believe you, it is your wish to remain buried in this old place till you grow an ancient maiden, as furrowed and withered as one of these old oaks, and as grown over with moss — eh, Evelyn?"

"I did not exactly say that," said she, colouring, and laughing a little: "I said . . ."

"No matter what you said — because, if you *had* said it, nobody would have believed you. You are a very wise and sober young lady, Miss Evelyn Marston, everybody knows *that*. But not quite so wise, or rather so outrageously silly, as seriously to wish to die an old maid."

"You know what I meant," she said, rather shortly.

"Yes, I suppose I did — and if I did *not*, I should be sure to be set right by one always ready enough to take me up," he answered, tartly.

Old habits were beginning to stir.

"However," stopping himself; for he also seemed resolved not to lose his temper — "the short and the long of the matter is," he went on, "that the earlier you are settled now, the more eligible I think it will be; for you are wasting life here, and the sooner you begin to enjoy it, the better — That's my view of the subject, Miss Marston."

Oh! but her heart began to flutter and beat in a most inconvenient manner now; — now, when she wanted to be so self-collected. She scarcely knew where she was, or what she was doing.

"And so, my dear, trusting your choice will meet my approbation, I have..."

"You are so kind! — so very good! — papa — papa! — my choice! Oh! if you are so indulgent as to give me the choice!..."

"Why, to be sure you must have a choice — that is to say, I hope we shall agree in our choice — and as you really have not seen a creature but the one in question, so far as I am aware — why, I don't see, if you *have* thought about a choice, but that we must be pretty nearly of the same mind."

"Is it possible?" she cried.

"Possible! — Pray why not? I should be a strange sort of father if I could raise any objection."

It was a happiness too great. Its very excess was an abatement. It was scarcely allowed her to believe in such unexpected felicity.

"My dearest father! how can I ever thank you enough? — Such disinterestedness! such condescension! Such a noble and generous way of thinking ..."

"Hold! — hold! — what are we talking of? Fine words! but not *exactly* suited to the matter in hand. — If you had said a very good father, who knows how to look sharply after his daughter's interests and his own, you would have been a little nearer the mark, for it's a splendid estate."

"Estate! What? Do I understand?" her head was beginning to turn round. "Surely! surely!"

"A very fine estate indeed! and in such a neighbourhood! — where trade is advancing so rapidly; it will in time become almost a principality. He might have a title any day, if he pleased; but he is so full of his trines and his tangents, that I doubt whether he will ever care to ask for one. But he is a good fellow — Slow, may be, with all his mathematics; and rather a beetle-browed, black-haired, sallow-looking lad; but you like him, that's enough — and I like him, that's more — and I shall see you wife to one of the richest commoners in England, as well as the finest woman in the three northern counties."

"What can this mean? what are you saying now?" suddenly restored to nervous power by the extremity of the situation. "You were not thinking of Leonard Fitzroy all this time?"

"And who on earth else should I have been thinking of?"

"Then I tell you plainly, I will never marry him."

"Short and sweet, and very dutifully and respectfully expressed, my young lady; and my answer is — then you shall marry him, and nobody else but him, or we'll see who's master here."

"You are master of the place; but I am mistress of myself, and of my own heart, and over that, no man on earth has a right of control. It is the happiness of my life that is in question; and of the best means of securing that, I believe myself to be the only judge, and to have the sole right to judge."

"Mrs. Mary Wolstonecraft all over," making her a low, mocking bow; "but I beg to say things are not *quite* so easily settled in actual life as in books. — No doubt, every syllable you utter, is as logical as if it sprung from reason itself; but there are two sides to every question. I happen to be your father. I happen to have a little power. I know what is for your good, and I mean, in course, to exercise the power every father I know, has and does exercise, in spite of all the *trash* of the day, and marry you when and where I think proper . . . I imagine," he said, checking himself, and lowering his tone, which was becoming very loud — "I show condescension enough to such nonsense in fixing upon a man I know you know — I know you like — and who is an excellent fellow, as well as one of the richest commoners in England."

"I shall not marry him."

"Have a care! have a care! Don't provoke me — We have been better friends than usual, lately. — Don't, Evelyn! don't be so absurd. What do you mean by speaking in that positive way? You know you will marry him. You are no fool, we all know that. You are not going to refuse him merely for the pleasure of vexing your father? — but, on my salvation, I believe that is your principal reason Child! you are not going to make a quarrel from mere wilfulness of heart. Don't, Evelyn! — What reason on earth can you find for this absurdity?"

"I don't like him enough to be happy with him; and I will never marry where I do not love and honour too. — I thought you knew me better, father. I thought you knew me better," she went on impetuously, "than to believe I would sell myself for money Marry for money! — I despise money! I hate money! Oh! but I love and care for far different things!"

"You do! A very disinterested declaration for a young lady who, so far as I have observed, wastes as much money; spends as much money; and would be as uncomfortable without plenty of money, as anybody I know. I beg your pardon, but I think I understand you a little better than you do yourself. I don't believe you would get on at all without money — and a power of money too, with habits such as yours. Nonsense! stuff!"

"I may have been foolishly fond of expense at one

time, but I see things differently now," she answered, trying with all her might to keep herself quiet.

"And if I may make so bold ... Pray, my very sage and temperate young madam, what new lights have broken in upon you, and taught you the emptiness of grandeur, the worthlessness of riches, and the very excessive valuelessness of gold and silver? I think that's something in the way the fools talk. Well, I'm sorry; but I don't think it the most barbarous thing a cruel father ever did, to oblige a fair votary of poverty and dry crusts, like you, to do a little better for herself. I know," he said, suddenly assuming a graver tone; "I know you liked this fellow well enough formerly, and it is impossible you can have any other attachment, unless you have fallen in love with the chimney-sweeper. I have taken care of that. If such were the case, it might be another thing; but I know it is impossible. Lay your hand upon your heart and deny it if you can, Evelyn."

"Would it be another thing? dear papa," coming once more gently and lovingly up to him, and looking into his eyes with a pleading that would have melted a heart of stone. "Would it? dear, dear papa!"

"Would it? Yes, I suppose it would ... but," seizing her arm in a sudden burst, almost a frenzy of passion, "you are not going to say — you are not going to dare to say — that there is anything of the

sort? Take care, Miss. Take care. I feel as if I could kill you."

He released her arm. She was silent.

"Speak, unworthy girl! The truth! the truth! Speak!"

"Why unworthy? There is no unworthiness. The truth! There is the truth — I am engaged."

"What do you mean, you fool! Engaged! you are dreaming. — 'My heart is no longer my own!' That's the phrase, I think. — Your heart no longer your own! eh? — Well then, you must learn to live without your heart — for by heaven and hell, I swear you shall not go after it."

She stood silent, looking very pale, but resolute, firm as a rock. She had wonderful moral force. It was all collected now.

"Speak!" he said, passionately. "Speak again. — I shall strike you if you maintain this insolent silence."

"I do not mean to be insolent Heaven knows!" and one or two tears now sprang to her eyes; "but what must I do?"

"Do? Why, be less insanelly absurd, and listen to me."

"I have listened. But what good does that do?"

"Good! Why, help you to understand, that's all; that you are to marry Leonard Fitzroy — and have done with nonsense."

"I will not — because I cannot. Father, it would

be wickedness — it would be the greatest wickedness, with my feelings — to marry any man on earth but one — And I have given him my solemn promise! unasked by him, but volunteered by me. — I have sworn that I never will belong to another.”

It was Mr. Marston's turn to look pale now. He was blue with rage. All he could stammer out, was —

“And the man? ... the man? ... the man?”

“A man too good for us. — A man we are neither of us worthy of — Armand Du Chastel, the son of Du Chastel the martyr!” with a burst of enthusiasm.

“What! what!! what!!! the painter? the son of the bankrupt Du Beggar — the painter! Say it again. Say it again; for may I perish, if I don't believe you do it to drive me mad!”

“Oh father! father!” the woman taking her turn at last, and breaking down into tears; “don't speak so! don't speak so! Spare me! spare me! for, indeed, I love him.”

“Spare you! you worthless, abominable, shameless hussey!”

“Spare me! spare me!”

“I see — I see. The lad was modest enough. He knew his place, I must say that — at least, he seemed as if he did — But either he is the most infamous of domestic hypocrites and traitors, or you have thrown yourself at his head in a manner you ought to die

rather than own — I blush for you, Miss Marston — I blush for you.”

It was what she did for herself; her face, neck, hands even, were crimson. She could not lift up her eyes — bowed down by a sudden sense of woman's shame — she stood there.

Things suddenly presented by a hostile tongue appear so often in an unthought-of light.

Had she? — had she been too forward? had she? — had she?

It was not her father's rage that was killing her — it was a sudden fear of her lover's scorn.

“You may well look ready to sink into the earth,” continued her father, violently. “I know nothing so disgraceful as a woman that falls in love, as you call it, with an inferior. All modesty and shame must be extinct, before such things can be possible. I thought better of you, Evelyn — Faults you had, and plenty — but the want of a gentlewoman's pride and delicacy I never thought to see in you.”

She continued speechless — she was trembling all over.

Her father saw her confusion, and his own advantage, and pressed it.

He went up to her with a changed tone, and a kind expression of face.

“Come, come,” he said, “I see you are sorry — you are humbled enough. Let us have done with it.

Let me hear no more of this rascally, designing young hypocrite."

But at that, all the fire which had been smothered by one dreadful doubt, burst up with only the more violence, from her extreme agitation.

"Don't! don't! — You sha'n't! you sha'n't! Say what you will to *me*. — You *sha'n't* abuse him!"

"Sha'n't I?" passionately — "we'll see. I tell you I look upon him as an infamous, designing, interested scoundrel! creeping into an honest man's house, to get at his daughter's money — a mean, paltry fortune-hunter!"

"You sha'n't! you sha'n't! you sha'n't speak his name! You are not worthy to utter his name!"

He had found out how to gall her, and he was merciless. She was driven almost frantic with passion.

We need pursue the painful scene no further.

Alas! sentences became inarticulate on both sides, in a perfect storm of rage and invective. It lasted but too long. That was said which cannot be forgiven.

Alas! alas!

At length they parted.

It was impossible they should meet again.

A father's wrath — when once thoroughly aroused — is bitter, is fierce, is implacable above all other wrath. A child, when once the bounds of duty and respect are thrown down, is the most sullen and obstinate of rebels!

CHAPTER V.

IN those days, when fathers were provoked beyond endurance, the catastrophe usually ended in the turning of the offender out of doors.

We never hear such things now.

But passions ran high then, and the methods either of revenge or chastisement were violent and partook of a certain rudeness, not to say savageness, which still lingered in domestic manners.

Miss Marston was as determined as her father; and his rage knew no bounds, when he found the utter impossibility of making her yield.

She was, too, a fine, high-spirited girl, in the full vigour of health, mental and bodily; and not to be subdued by any of the ordinary methods of coercion — methods such as we read of in old novels — confinement to her closet, bread and water, solitude, and terror, like poor, poor Clarissa.

She set her father at open defiance.

Opinions were making their first advances as regarded the rights, wrong or right, of women. She stood upon the one right, now almost universally acknowledged — the right of the individual to decide upon what will constitute the happiness of her future life.

She was strengthened by the consciousness that she

had placed her affections worthily — that she was already better — would be everlastingly better — for the influences under which she had resolved to live. She loved Armand with all the passionate devotion of a fond girl's heart; but she did more — she venerated him as a higher nature. To be with him and his, was to rise in the scale of being — to share in something like the society of saints and angels.

She felt so right — her feelings were so pure, so just, so virtuous, that like many others, who are satisfied with their own intentions, she quite forgot that there could be anything reprehensible in her way of carrying them out.

She thought her father tyrannical and unjust. She forgot how natural his feelings were — how next to impossible it was, that a man accustomed through life to his way of thinking, could be brought to sympathize with hers; or to regard her conduct as anything but the effect of the most romantic folly, and most unpardonable disobedience.

He was quite as certain that he was right, as she could be, and far more bitter, violent, and implacable, in his resentment, than she was. Though her spirit once aroused, there is not much to be said in defence of the manner in which she asserted her independence and the resolution to please herself.

A few more painful scenes it is unnecessary to describe.

There is no doubt that Miss Marston would not have hesitated to take her flight from her father's home, had any coercive measures on his part rendered it necessary; but he spared her the trouble, by turning her out of doors himself; which, after a scene of extreme violence, he did — literally — according to the fashion of the times — telling her she might go where she would — he would send her things after her — but whilst he breathed he would neither see nor speak to her again.

She left the house, and walked steadily up the carriage road that led out of the park, scorning to look back; her whole soul in tumult, and a thousand bitter speeches rising to her tongue — almost resolving to return and give vent to her rage and passion, in a few more last violent words.

Quite beside herself she was. Perfectly mastered by her own intemperance — insensible to everything but the rage which her father's cruel and outrageous abuse of herself, her lover, and everything she venerated, had excited.

The last act, the turning her out of doors, had put the climax upon all.

Yet, even then! even then —

It is the case, I believe, with almost all — even with those most entirely wanting in moral culture — even then ... loud and raging as was the storm, a still, small voice was whispering at the bottom of her heart, and telling her she was wrong.

Can any child outrage the voice of nature, by disregard of those humanities, those pieties, those respects, which every parent has a claim to from his child, and not hear that low whisper, murmuring that it is wrong?

I do not suppose that Mr. Marston's conscience was equally eloquent. Indeed, I can affirm that it was not. In the first place, he was the parent — violence from him had not the unnaturalness in it. It may be cruel, unjust, tyrannical — but it has not the unnaturalness in it. A parent may chastise a child — no child can lift its hand against a father. Virginius might plunge his dagger in his daughter's breast — we cannot reverse the picture.

Perhaps I insist too much upon this difference, and do not make my distinctions quite understood; but there is a difference; and whilst Evelyn's heart was throbbing with passion, the still, small voice was reproaching her — whilst Mr. Marston's conscience was silent.

To be sure, the two characters, except in their heat and self-will, were as different as possible. One, all love, generosity, and candour, and the other all calculation, selfishness, and obstinacy.

But all I mean to say is, that Mr. Marston remained implacable, and no self-reproving voice pleaded for the offender — and that Evelyn had no sooner crossed his threshold, than a secret self-upbraiding began.

But she stifled it. She was too deeply wounded and

offended by the treatment she had received, to think of returning and acknowledging, with her usual candour, how far she had been to blame.

Besides, how would such a concession be received? Probably, as all her concessions were received; in the way best fitted to make her repent she had made them. Moreover, in this case, one concession alone would be available, and that she was resolved not to make — and she felt herself right there. Then, he had turned her out of doors — would she come back and apologize for her violence, when he was sure to attribute her submission merely to the wish to be taken in again?

Impossible! — That humiliation would be worse than death.

Such were the thoughts that, like the tumultuous billows in a stormy sea, kept rising one after the other in her troubled mind.

She walked fast, and found herself, before she was aware, at one of the gates of the park. A boundary gate, and it opened upon the public road. A lodge was by the side of it.

The woman came out to open the gate — looking rather surprised to see Miss Marston preparing to leave the park unattended — a thing that had never happened in her life before.

Evelyn paused, as the gate slowly opened.

The road! the high road! the common high road, lay before her! and her father's house! — the house of her

childhood! the nest in which she had been fostered! — Security! comfort! protection!...her childhood's home, the abode of her youth — her whole life — behind!

A man sitting in his cart was passing by, whistling as he went. Two lads on the other side were driving a couple of sheep before them — that was all.

It was a long, straight, wide, turnpike-road, bounded upon one side by the park wall and overhanging trees; upon the other, by a very high quickset hedge, over which nothing was to be seen.

She had often passed this way in her father's carriage. It had never looked as it did now.

It would be stupid to remind you of Eve and Paradise, but one cannot help having it in one's thoughts, upon such an occasion — but it was not in hers. It was no Paradise she was leaving — her Paradise was not there — but it *was* home, sacred home!

The woman curtseyed as she passed the gate!

Evelyn had not yet crossed the threshold — if you call it so, of a gate — had she done so, I believe she would have found it impossible to turn back; but the aspect of the road seemed to recall her to her senses. She began to think what she must do.

The sight of the people passing, made her realize what she had not thought of before; that when turned out of her father's park, she should at once be exposed to all sorts of communications from all sorts of people, and that she should be without protection.

— Then it struck upon her how very, very pitiless it was of her father, to expose her to all this; and burning tears seemed to swell in her bosom without rising to her eyes. There was that swell of the heart within, which every one has felt some time or other.

Her anger was already yielding to that feeling. "How could he be so unkind?"

Her resolution, however, was speedily taken — for she was prompt and brave.

To go back was impossible — forward she must — and her first asylum should be with her own nurse, who, now an elderly woman, lived in a small house, about two miles from this gate of the park. To go there alone, indeed, to be even for a night without the attendance of a servant, was, with her habits, disagreeable; she resolved to turn into the lodge, and send the woman to fetch her own maid, Esther, to her.

So she went in and shut the door, so that no one might accidentally see her, and having dispatched the woman with an order to Esther, to come to her directly, sat down to await her arrival with what patience she might.

Indeed, it did not require any great exercise of patience to do this; for even meeting her maid was become so disagreeable that she was not sorry to have it delayed. Everything in the extraordinary and most fatal position in which she had placed herself, seemed reversed and unnatural.

Was this but the beginning of sorrows?

What a disgrace to be thus discarded!

Had she deserved it?

“Not” — her heart answered — “certainly not for her resistance to what was to her a wrong, an impiety, a wicked blasphemy against her heart’s best affections. Not for that!”

“But for the way of doing it.”

Oh! what would she not have given now to have felt herself blameless? —

For the testimony of an approving conscience telling her that right in the principle, she had also been right in the manner; mistress of herself, ruler over her own passions — gentle, pious, soft, and daughterlike in her opposition.

Had she but been that! — had she been the calm, reasonable, self-governed woman, instead of the violent, rude, passionate child — how differently all might have ended! Her father might have been angry, might have been unjust, cruel even, when thus opposed; but he could never have been what she had provoked him into becoming. The very brutality of his rage, so disgraceful to him, so dreadful to her! It was she who had exasperated — goaded him into it.

This disgraceful separation! — disgraceful to him still more than to her — might never — never *could* have taken place! — and even if it had! — if nothing would

have melted or moved him — oh, what would she give to have been without self-reproach!

Self-reproach!

It would attend her to her dying day.

Yet, in spite of all these regrets and remorse, the idea of going back, of humbling herself before her father, as I said before, never presented itself as a possibility. But that was his own fault. He was one who had made it too difficult to be penitent and candid. A confession of error would only be an occasion of sarcastic triumph quite unbearable. It would serve to harden, not soften him; and short of an entire submission to his will, she felt, nothing would be of any use.

So go on she must, since turned out she was.

And then the inquiry arose —

And with what face could she appear before her lover now?

What would he think? — what would he feel?

No longer Miss Marston of Donnington Abbey, surrounded with all those advantages which adorn and beautify, and so excite the imagination — and no imagination more than her own — but a fugitive from her father's house, a homeless vagabond upon the earth, the object of his pity, perhaps of his censure.

And then, as a little comfort in a corner sprang up — an unromantic one, if you will — but still it *was* a comfort it must be owned — there rose up the pleasant recollection of her forty thousand pounds. And

she felt so thankful — so very thankful — to whom or to what, it might be hard to say — for she was not used to carry her thoughts in that direction. In some respects she was as complete a heathen as the most untutored savage.

However, very thankful she was; and her spirits, which were naturally good, began to rise; and her schemes for making her lover independent and happy and his father and mother likewise, began to blossom out again; like flowers opening when the sun comes from behind a cloud; and so, by the time the woman of the lodge returned, accompanied by Esther, Evelyn was pretty much herself, and gave her directions with composure enough.

She told Esther that she was going to Nurse Bond's, and should stay there all night — perhaps a day or two; that she must walk with her there, and then go back to Donnington and fetch her night-clothes; and so, getting up, she bade the woman at the lodge good morning; and with a tranquillity that surprised herself — but this was one of those lulls which succeed a storm', when one is quite worn-out with agitation — she passed the gate, and entered upon the unknown world before her.

CHAPTER VI.

"Then I confess, before high heaven and you,
That before all, and next unto high heaven,
I love him."

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

NURSE BOND was sitting in a neat little parlour, about the size of the closet at the abbey occupied by Miss Marston's dresses; but it was cheerful and scrupulously clean; and contained various small articles of furniture, which had been the gifts of Miss Marston herself, at different times; though Evelyn had not been in the habit of thinking about other people's comforts as much as she ought. Almost the first thing that struck her as she entered the parlour was how few presents she had made to Nurse Bond, followed by a resolution to amend that fault, at least.

This cottage, which was to initiate Miss Marston into the charms of a rural life of simplicity, was, I am sorry to say, not at all of that picturesque and romantic sort, the description of which makes one in love with that kind of existence — in fancy, at least, whatever it may prove in reality.

But though not picturesque; having no tumble-down roof, covered with house-leek and grasses, or little peeping windows smiling through garlands of sweet-briar and honeysuckle — it was what, perhaps, in the present

case, was rather more to the purpose, substantially built, and well secured from wind and weather — also from smoke, which, to the unaccustomed to such things, is one of the greatest nuisances they can be exposed to. Yet, to say truth, the extremely prosaic air of the whole concern did more, perhaps, to bring Miss Marston's spirits down than any positive evils might have done. There would have been something exciting, bordering upon the heroic, in taking refuge from the cruelty of her father under the roof of a regular poor man's cottage; but there was little to raise the imagination in a neat door, painted with a very coarse and vulgar imitation of oak, a narrow lobby, with green stained walls, and Mrs. Bond's diminutive parlour — square, with a small sash-window on one side, and an ordinary fireplace upon the other. Upon a little wooden chimney-piece stood two very common lustres, two castles, with each two round towers in shell-work, to hold candle-lighters, and a couple of chalk parrots, red and green, with Mrs. Bond's watch in a Derbyshire brown-and-white spar stand. A very uncomfortable old-fashioned sofa and six chairs, all covered with horse-hair, were ranged against the walls; a mahogany pembroke table, according to custom, under the window, and Mrs. Bond sitting spinning in a comfortable arm-chair, and with a little painted claw table, which Evelyn had given her, standing on one side: this completed the furnishing of the room. The hum of the spinning-wheel, and the

chirp of a bulfinch hanging in a cage by the window, being the only sounds to be heard.

"Bless me!" cries Mrs. Bond, starting up from her spinning; "Miss Evelyn! as sure as I'm alive!"

"Yes, nurse; myself — neither more nor less. But is that so very wonderful?"

"Why," said the old lady, and her face clouded rather, "it oughtn't to be wonderful; and I, Miss Marston's own nurse — mother-nurse, Miss Evelyn ... but it's natural you should think less of that than I do."

"Why, you know, nurse, I don't forget it. But you are never contented. I came to you as often as I could. — I was here a short time ago."

"Three months, Miss Evelyn, the twentieth of last month — coming on four; but it's natural — it's natural," but this in a tone which showed that, however natural it might be, it was not thought the more excusable; "and at all events, you are come now. So pray sit down, Miss Evelyn," she went on, presenting a chair, "and don't be in such a hurry to run away, as you usually are. It's a long time, Miss Marston, since I've seen you. I hope you will sit down a bit."

Evelyn knew well enough that she had been negligent, though she had thought little about it, until it was her turn to be the obliged person. Now she wished she had earned for herself a somewhat different reception. She knew old Nurse Bond's heart; she had neither a

very sweet nor a very placable temper, but she had a capital understanding, and a most affectionate disposition. Where she loved, she loved warmly; but she was a little exacting, perhaps, in her expectation of a return; and certainly she was too clever a woman to be paid with words in place of deeds.

She had often been hurt by Evelyn's negligence in calling upon her, knowing how well she was aware that a visit from her foster-child was the pride and almost the sole pleasure of her old nurse's existence. She could not help feeling that Miss Marston might have taken the trouble to come oftener. That it ought not to have been a trouble, but a pleasure; not duty, but inclination, which brought her to see the person who had loved her the best of anything in the world, and had lavished upon her infancy and childhood those innumerable tendernesses and cares to which she was indebted for so large a portion of her health and beauty. Bond well knew also, that few, so little looked after as she had been, would have fulfilled their part so faithfully. She could not forget, though others might, the watchful nights, the weary days, the tedious infantile disorders, the triumph over childish maladies in some of their most severe forms, which she had achieved; the temptations to negligence resisted, even the good offers of marriage refused, and all for the sake of that child who had hung an infant at her breast. Mr. Marston had provided for her handsomely when the days of service

were over, as rich and ostentatious men are wont to do with their dependants, and Bond felt grateful for it; but there was something wanting —

That something unpossessed,
Which clouds and poisons all the rest.

And this was the fault of Evelyn.

She loved Nurse Bond very well, but not very much; for Bond, though a most faithful nurse, one who deserved the name of friend, had her fancies and her tempers, and was a good deal more strict and precise in her notions than had at all suited the little Miss Marston's wild spirits and independent tastes; so that she had never inspired that passionate affection which is excited in some children for their nurses. This was no fault of Evelyn's; but it was a fault, knowing the extreme affection felt by Bond, and her own deep obligations to her, that she had been so careless in paying the little attentions by which she could in the least redeem the debt.

She knew her visits were the greatest of pleasures, and that her neglect occasioned the sharpest pain to the good woman; but it was a bore and a trouble to go — just too far for a walk, and there was a carriage to be ordered, and a fuss to be made when she went — things she hated; so she was for ever finding an excuse for putting a call off; and when she at last came, half the time was spent in apologizing for not having come be-

fore; and she was most often obliged, by some engagement or other, to depart in such haste, that she would leave the old woman's heart almost sorer than if she had not come at all.

Thus it went on. The neglect degenerated into a habit, and, like other evil habits, the fault strengthened; till at last, owing to her recent occupation of thought, a longer time had elapsed than ever since her last hurried visit to Nurse Bond.

"So pray sit down, Miss Evelyn," Nurse Bond said, presenting a chair, "and don't be in such a hurry to run away, as you usually are. . . . And please tell me a little about the Hall — how is all going on at the old place? — I've not heard a word of it, I don't know when . . . and how's master? and where is he?"

"Master's at the Hall," said Evelyn, sitting down; upon which nurse resumed her place, looking as if in expectation she was already enjoying a good chat. "And, nurse, don't be angry with me for not coming so often as I ought to have done, for I'm going to make you more amends than perhaps you will quite desire . . . I'm come to ask whether I may stay a little while with you? — If you dislike it, you must turn me out of doors."

"Like it! bless me, dear Miss Evelyn, how you talk! You're not really come to tea? — I'll have it ready in two minutes."

"Tea! good woman! I don't know how many teas,

and breakfasts, and dinners too! Do you know what it is I'm going to ask of you? — Whether you will let me live with you till you're tired of me?"

"Bless the dear child! how she does talk! That's just like yourself, Miss Evelyn; always trying to make a fool of people, with your fun and nonsense."

"Neither fun nor nonsense, however, now. The short and the long of the matter is — will you take Esther and me in to live with you for a time?"

"You're not going even to stay tea, I dare say," said nurse, getting displeased in having the precious moments wasted in this sort of dull joking, as she thought it. "I know, by your way, you're not."

"I'm not going to stay tea unless you please," said Evelyn, rising, beginning to be affronted in her turn, at what she mistook for want of proper *empressement* on Bond's part; "but the truth may as well be told at once. My father . . . my father has turned me out of doors, and I do not know where on earth to go."

"Turned you out of doors! — Mercy on us all!" lifting up her old withered arms in the utmost amazement.

"You don't mean it! — you can't mean it! — Turned you out of doors! — And what *can* you have done?"

"*I* done! — Of course I must be to blame," said Evelyn, sitting down again. "Of course, my father could be neither unjust nor cruel."

"I didn't say that — I didn't dare to say that. I know Mr. Marston ... but a father's heart is a father's heart — They don't use turn their own daughter out o' doors for nothing ... But dear me! dear me! what can it be about? — what can it be about? Turned out o' doors! — why it's more like a story-book than real. Dear, dear, dear Miss Evelyn, it can't be, sure!"

"It is, however. — I am turned out of doors, literally, nurse ... And he does not know whether I have five pounds in the world or not. I may starve or perish in the streets for anything he would care ... There's father's love for you!"

"My dear Miss Marston," said nurse, who was now trembling all over; "I'm but a servant, I know, but I was your nurse, and almost your mother, when you, poor baby, wanted one. This sad news puts me into such a flutter, that my thoughts seem running round like a mill-wheel, nohow. — I cannot understand it — but I hope ... I hope, dear, dear Miss Evelyn, you have not quarrelled with your father outright?"

"That must be as he pleases to make it."

"But you shouldn't, you know, Miss Evelyn. — Parents can't and won't take sauce from their children. — It's against the commandment."

"Sauce!" colouring; "what do you mean by sauce? How do you know how I spoke to him?"

"Oh, because ... I *do* know. I've heard you, Miss

Evelyn — many and many's the time, when I've been sorry."

"Did you never hear my father speak to me?"

"Oh, but, dear Miss Evelyn, only think that's so different. A child and a parent, a man and a woman.... Mr. Marston has a high, rough way with him, we all know that — and his temper may be, not of the best — but a soft answer turneth away wrath. ... And oh, Miss Evelyn, how good it is, and how many a time I'd have given all I had in the world, from your lips to hear it."

"You're going too far. You presume upon my situation," was rising to Evelyn's lips, as her face grew hotter and hotter; but she had the grace to arrest the words before they were uttered.

They would have been unjust. Nurse Bond was the last woman in the world to take advantage of any one's situation, least of all of hers. Evelyn knew that it was a most sincere, though humble friendship, which prompted the words, to her most bitter — for she felt, alas! how true they were.

She was silent for a little time, struggling with her temper; at last she said, —

"I am sorry you suppose me so very much to blame, and that, before you know a single thing about it."

There was temper in this speech, but it was the best she could do with herself.

"No, Miss Evelyn, don't please say that. I don't

pretend to judge. What am I? — a poor servant — but it's an awful, awful thing, for a young lady like you to be turned out of her father's house. What will people say?"

"People! As if I cared for people! All I care for is, whether I was in the right — and I *was* in the right — I was, indeed, nurse. Not in the manner, perhaps, but in the main."

"I'm glad to hear it — very glad to hear it — but it must have been a sore business, if you were right in the main — and I see you were — I see you *think* you were," for nurse understood her foster-child well.

"He wanted to marry me to Leonard Fitzroy for money, and I won't. I don't love Leonard Fitzroy — and no father upon earth has a right to force one to marry against one's will."

"Ah, my — that's it, I thought some time or other it would come to this. But can't you like Mr. Fitzroy?... You and he used to play together as children. I thought you liked him well enough. He's a good man, and a clever man — they say, a *very* clever man; and you like that. He's got a fine estate, now his brother's dead — It's a pity, isn't it, that you should be so very positive not to please your father?"

"I can't do it, and I won't do it — and he knows, if he has any candour in him, why I can't, and that I ought not."

"Ought not! How can he feel you ought not?"

"Because I love another."

Her face was all crimson with excitement — it rushed out — she would have given worlds to have recalled the words as soon as they were uttered, but it was too late.

But she need not have been so sorry.

"Poor dear!" said nurse; "is that it?"

And she looked at her with an eye so sympathising and compassionate, that it was impossible to resist the comfort of it.

"Poor dear! poor dear!" nurse went on, as if talking to herself; "and I thought you were so safe up there from *that* — I always dreaded *that* — it was so likely you and Mr. Marston would fall out about *that* — but I fancied as how Leonard Fitzroy would set all right, as you'd seen nobody else ... My heart alive! who can it have been?"

"A man, nurse, that no one need blush to own."

"I hope so! — I hope so! — but you've seen nobody. It isn't the vicar, for he's an old married man, and has only daughters — and it can't, sure, be the young doctor, because he isn't no gentleman! ... He's a vulgar, profligate young man, Miss Marston, believe me; I hope it isn't him. But who else can you have seen?"

Miss Marston put up her lip with a look of magnificent disdain at the mention of the young apothecary, who was indeed as worthless a small professional as need to be.

"Make yourself easy, nurse; it's neither vicar nor doctor. No," said she, gently and seriously, and taking nurse's hand — "no, my good woman, I am overrun with faults — I am nothing but faults — but one good thing is left in me. I do not take pleasure in 'those that do them.' Profligacy, if it owned a sceptre, I should detest. Vice, arrayed in every possible earthly pride and glory, I should abhor — I hate it! — I loathe it! What I love — and it is the only right thing in me — is what is good, pure, excellent. Oh, how different! how far different from myself! ... It's like another element. It's like a better world. It's like Heaven itself to be near him, nurse."

Nurse could not resist the inclination to gently stroke the glowing cheek.

"I always said there was the angel under all," she whispered.

Evelyn went on.

"I have not made my choice hastily, as you might suppose — as everybody has a right to suppose such a rash, self-willed fool as I am, would have done. No, dear nurse, I have struggled, and thought, and prayed — yes, nurse, prayed ... and who taught me to pray? *he* did. You should have heard what he told us of his father; and great, good, noble men, like his father ... How they suffered, and how they prayed — and if men, strong, wise, able men, struggled and prayed, what should I, a vain, impetuous, faulty, foolish creature do,

but pray too? I did it badly — I did it badly! but I came to my resolution, and that was — that I would give my life to him who would teach me the true worth of life; my fortune to one who well knew the uses of fortune; my heart to one who would take that heart, and generously, gently, lovingly, lead it to Him whom I never rightly knew. — Knew! Never rightly guessed at till I found Armand Du Chastel.”

She was all beauty now; glowing, generous, angelic beauty was spread like a glory over that truth-speaking face.

“And Mr. Marston won’t hear of it? ... Did you tell him all this, and won’t he hear of it?” said nurse, thoroughly melted, and thoroughly converted:

“No — no! *He* hear of it! He abuses him, and scorns him, and tramples on him, because — because — he is poor!”

“Poor! ah! — ah! that’s it! that’s it; but has he nothing? Is he a real gentleman? and has he nothing? ... Most gentlemen have something. Trample on him! How dare *he* trample on him. Nay, but Mr. Marston’s very rich — but, poor *gentlemen*! — He’s no right to trample on them nor anybody ... who has?”

“Ah! who has? who has? Yet they will — they all will ... but what care I?”

“And what is his state in life then, if he has no money? I hope he’s no idle do-nothing. — I hope he does something for a living.”

"Yes; he labours indefatigably to maintain himself and to assist in maintaining his father and mother. — Idle! he works like a galley-slave.... Young! delicate! formed for the fairest and highest enjoyments as he is, he works and strives like the veriest drudge on earth! But one thing is lucky — his work is beautiful, and ideal, and lofty as himself. Oh! he is as full of genius as of every other good and generous gift — and *such* an artist!"

"Artist! what's that?"

"Why, a painter — a painter....."

"Painter! Not a house painter, I *do* hope."

In spite of her agitation, Evelyn could hardly help laughing.

"A house painter! What *are* you thinking of, nurse?"

"Nay, but there are house-painters who doesn't paint themselves, but has men as does ... but somehow, it's not a gentleman's profession, Miss Marston — it ain't, indeed."

"It ain't, indeed!" mimicking; for her spirits were beginning to rise; "but this gentleman paints walls himself, with his own right hand.... Isn't that shocking, nurse? Why, he has painted the saloon at the abbey. Have you not heard of that? — and it's the most beautiful thing that ever has been done, I believe, since Raphael painted the walls of the Vatican."

"Vat, Vat ... and the other name ... well, I know

nothing about it; only I'm sorry he's a painter, Miss Marston. — It's not the place for you to be a painter's wife, and the stink of the oils all through the house!"...

"Dear woman! what are you talking about? You don't understand the matter at all. Oh, no!" kindling again. "You don't know — you can't know — how should you? when so few do, or can. Oh, no! how should you understand any more than others, all that is beautiful, good, divine, in genius such as his? — else the whole world would fall down and worship, as my poor heart does.... And to think! to think!"

And then the enchanting thought rose up afresh. The thought of all that it was in her power to do for the being she so worshipped, in return for the love she knew he bore her.

* * * * *

And so the day passed off after all, in a sort of rapturous excitement, which it might have been expected would be spent in mortification and tears.

But Evelyn was too happy in her own thoughts, in the wild dreams of her heart and imagination, to think much of the circumstances in which she actually stood, or to feel sensible to the many positive wants and privations with which the new life she had entered upon would be accompanied.

She did not observe that the dinner set before her was rough and uncomfortable; for Mrs. Bond was not

one whose nice habits rendered every place and every meal pleasing and delicate. Nor did she trouble herself about the exigency of a bed-room almost filled up with a large four-post bed as the manner then was, and in which there was hardly room left to turn oneself.

It was not till she was left alone with her own thoughts in this same four-post bed, that the excitement of her spirits began to subside, and her situation present itself to her mind in its true colours.

Late in the evening, Esther had returned, accompanied by the spring market-cart, loaded with trunks and boxes.

The intelligence she brought was, that Mr. Marston had already left the abbey, having given orders that all his daughter's property of every description should be cleared from her room, and carried after her. Esther was the bearer likewise of a note which Mr. Marston had left to be delivered at the same time with the things.

It was brief, and to this effect: —

“MR. MARSTON TO MISS MARSTON.

“I do not know whether you have got money — you seldom have it before-hand. I send you a cheque for one hundred pounds; you will receive that sum every quarter-day, if you will signify where it is to be sent to you. After what has passed between us, I can no longer

look upon you in the light of a daughter; but I have no wish you should starve.

“JOHN MARSTON.”

The arrival of the things, and the receipt of this letter it was, which checked the flow of Miss Marston's spirits, and called her out of the regions of ideal bliss to that ugly prosaic world of realities in which she had been little accustomed to dwell.

All was over then.

For the first time she actually understood that she was discarded, and that there was no room left for repentance or return. So long as she thought it in her power by submission to restore herself to her place, she had scorned the idea of it; but when submission itself, as she plainly saw, would be useless, her heart sank within her.

It was an awful situation, and mortifying; and the more so, as she read in Mrs. Bond's dismayed looks what she thought about it; and how little in her worst anticipations she had expected such an irrevocable sentence as this.

Mrs. Bond knew too well that Mr. Marston and his daughter often quarrelled, and that high words passed between them. She had not been very much surprised at her old master's violent measures; attributing them to the hasty passion of the moment. She had expected him to propose terms of reconciliation. She was not

prepared, long as she had known him, for this implacable spirit — this total abandonment of his daughter at once.

But it was not until Evelyn was left alone within her four curtains, the candle out, and the room only lighted by the spectral whiteness of the moon, as it shone coldly through the window at the foot of her bed, and threw dark melancholy shadows upon it and the floor, that her spirits altogether gave way, and nothing could be imagined more dreary than the prospect her thoughts presented.

She felt utterly alone in the world — and the world to her was one vast desert, stretching out before her an interminable, dreary waste.

All that was warm, genial, accustomed, sheltering, home-like, lay behind her, and from that she was irrevocably banished. All before her was bare — for what is more utterly bare to the heart than a future without associations?

One object there was, for which all had been sacrificed, and the thought of which, but a few hours before, had filled her with ineffable triumph and joy; but even that had faded now. In the sudden change of her spirits that happened — which happens to all women, I believe, and to many men, in the course of a love story — a sudden fading of the glory which it is the privilege of love to shed over every object, and in its place a dull, dreary, sceptical doubt of its reality. A sudden loss of

faith in one's own heart — a sudden awakening, as it were, and questioning whether all this passionate sentiment be more than the wildness of a dream.

That feeling came first, and it is a horrid feeling whilst it lasts; but it is passing like all sudden changes of the spirits, and Love soon reasserts his power; but there was a more serious and substantial cause for anxiety, when she had time for cool reflection, as regarded her lover.

Did he really — really love her? — or was the passion he had betrayed evanescent as her own attachment seemed half an hour ago to be in danger of becoming? *Her* heart was faithful, and, like the needle to the pole, had speedily returned to its true centre, after the momentary disturbance; but would his do so?

Men, she had read, were more inconstant than women. She could not have studied Shakspeare — and him she *had* studied, whatever else might have been neglected — without having received a strong impression of the inconstancy of men.

In those her triumphant days of airy spirits, she had little cared. She had defied love, and promised herself never to surrender her heart into the tyrant's power; but now, when everything dear in life was at stake, she trembled at the recollection of these old thoughts.

The very humility of true love — and hers was indeed most true and sincere — helped to increase her distrust.

When she thought of herself, with all her weaknesses, follies, and faults and compared herself with him, it seemed impossible he could love her.

That idea of her comparative wealth, which had been such a source of pleasure in the thought of bestowing it upon him, had lost its power now. If he did not love her, what mattered her wealth! He would, she knew it well, rather starve than prostitute his heart for gold; and she! — she! — oh! — as she covered her head in her pillow and burst into an agony of tears — she! — oh! she would do anything, the meanest! rather than lose him.

And thus that heart was bruised, and broken, and softened, and annealed, and prepared for firmer and better action.

* * * * *

But the real great, insurmountable difficulty upon which she dwelt with most despondency in her calmer moments, was upon their separation.

How were they ever to meet again?

He would not even know what had become of her. She would have no opportunity of assuring herself of his constancy; and the sort of gay security which the brilliant circumstances in which she lately stood, had given of an assured superiority in position which might venture on extraordinary steps — was gone.

The humiliated and discarded daughter could not venture upon that which might have seemed graceful in the splendid heiress of Donnington Abbey.

He would never even know that it had been for him that all this was lost. He would hear a garbled story — probably, would blame her.

But, alas! alas! the worst — the worst was — she should see him no more.

Indeed, this seemed but too probable a consequence, for circumstances appeared to have rushed in between them — that obstinate, invincible force of circumstances which separates so many in so unintelligible a manner.

Oh! why are hearts so bound by the mysterious inexplicable tie, to be parted by the cobweb of some apparently trifling accident?

Why is what is strongest, holiest, most precious, most lovely in life, the sport of the slightest and most capricious of events?

Why?

Because the hinges upon which life turns are among the minutest of things.

CHAPTER VII.

"Then flash'd the living lightning from her eyes,
And screams of horror rend the affrighted skies."

RAPE OF THE LOCK.

IN the meantime, Armand Du Chastel had returned to London, and to his old lodgings in the attics of that house in C— Street, leading from the Strand to the river.

But what a changed man entered that room again! And to him everything seemed changed too.

The closeness of the air, the stifling lowness of the ceiling, the dull, dingy, untrimmed aspect of everything around him, seemed almost suffocating. Not that he would have cared at other times — though he was exquisitely susceptible to external impressions — but because his heart was full, almost to bursting, and wanted room and air.

The passion, which might have expired in the birth in other circumstances, had, under the peculiar and romantic encouragement which it had received, increased to a strength which it had required all the resolute force of his character to keep within any bounds.

So long as he had been in the house with her, had been certain to see her every day, the sweetness of that certainty, and the respect, the almost idolatrous reverence

in which he held her, had helped him to keep himself tolerably tranquil. But, once parted — and it seemed as if his feelings knew no bounds. The agonies of his despair, when he had left her; when he had crossed the boundaries of her father's park and left her, perhaps, for ever, were only equalled by the rapturous ecstasy of his recollections, when words, looks, tones, meetings, partings, all so full of delightful assurance, came rushing to his memory.

But it is vain and foolish to attempt to describe the emotions of a man like this, in love. Those who have loved as he did, will understand it at once — to those who never have, not all the words in all the dictionaries of all the languages in the world, would make them comprehend it.

But the weight upon his heart seemed to press upon him everywhere, and to impede all vigorous action — He was parted from her, and the light of life seemed extinguished. He was as one suddenly struck blind.

How? When? Where? If ever — should they meet again?

How? When? Where? — Could it be right that they should meet again?

That was the bitterest part of it.

Nothing could raise him to her.

He knew too well, how in this country professional artists are regarded, to feel that the highest success in

his noble and beautiful calling, could ever reward him with the rich heiress of Donnington.

And with this conviction — which many, I believe, will think a most erroneous one — all pleasure, as all ambition in his art, seemed gone.

He cared not now what became of him. His pencil fell from his listless hand. What mattered success — if it was not for her; and as for the disinterested love of art which had been the impelling principle of his life till now — another passion, alas! how much more vehement, had superseded it.

His father was shocked when they met, at his son's pale, haggard looks; and he, well experienced in the history of the passions, was not long in divining the cause. But his son made no confidences. He complained of head-ache when questioned; and that was all. He had plenty of money by him for the present; he indulged his idleness, and his father would not remonstrate. He left it to time — hoping much from time — well aware of the power it usually exercises.

But time did nothing here.

As Armand's health declined, his natural spirits grew weaker, and the deep despondency which overshadowed his life, darkened. He was perplexed also, and kept in a constant state of feverish irritation by doubts as to what he ought to do.

To leave her after all that had passed between them, without giving her any mark of his own constancy, sin-

cerity, and deep devotion, seemed alike unjust to his own heart, and disloyal to hers; and yet, the pride — that pride which is the fault, if fault it be, of the highest and most delicate natures — seemed to command him to suffer in silence, rather than tempt her to a step everybody in the world would censure.

Thus the time had passed in London, whilst the events we have related had been going on at Donnington.

I omitted to mention, that before Armand's departure, Mrs. Allardice had left the Abbey upon her annual holiday of some weeks; so that her mediation, if it would have been of any use in soothing the quarrel (which there was little probability it would have been), was not available. As for Mademoiselle Fierville, she had been too lately admitted into the family to have been allowed to share in any confidential matters connected with it; and all she knew of the business was — that Mr. Marston had informed her one fine morning, that his daughter having left home for a considerable period, and his own views being altogether altered, he should not have any farther occasion for Mademoiselle Fierville's services. He added, that if it would be convenient to her to remain a month or so at the Abbey, in order to have time to provide herself with a place, he begged she would do so. Upon condition, however, that she did not enter into any communication with Miss Marston; so long as she, Mademoiselle, was an inmate under her father's roof.

So Mademoiselle was left to her own reflections, and to the consideration of what her next step in life should be.

She was a sharp, clever, little thing — as we all know, ever alive to her own interest — and quick-sighted enough in general, as to what was going on around her; but then, she had one fault which is peculiarly apt to impair the clearness of vision — she had inordinate vanity.

It was her persuasion, not only that she was irresistible, but that nothing did resist her; — and she fell into the common error of women of her stamp — that of fancying every man they meet with, in love with them.

That she spared no pains to bring this desirable consummation to bear — *cela* — as the French say, *va sans dire*.

She had, upon her first appearance at the Abbey, tried hard with Mr. Marston, who happened to be passing one of his few and far between visits there at the time; but for once she felt that she had not quite succeeded. There seemed to be some obstacle — she could not quite understand what — in the way. But, though disappointed, she was not altogether discouraged. She made up her mind to persevere, well knowing that men as well as hares may be hunted down.

But whilst she was resting upon her charms in the in-

terval of the master's visits, the young painter appeared, and Mademoiselle's tactics were changed.

She had not much heart; vain women rarely have; but she had some imagination, and what she had of either heart or imagination, was immediately captivated. It was a trait in her disposition to fall easily into love — if love such as hers may be called so. The master of the house was a middle-aged, not very good-looking, proud, obstinate, disagreeable man; and the chances were strongly against her being able to captivate him. The young artist, on the contrary, was young and sweet-tempered, and beautiful as Apollo, very well inclined to be sociable, and to indulge her in those playful compliments and agreeable *petits soins* which were the delight of her life.

At first, Armand Du Chastel really found amusement in chatting with the lively French woman — and thus compensating himself for the cold distance of the young lady of the house. Afterwards he talked to her as men do when they care only to talk to another, the provoking consciousness which oppresses them, rendering it impossible to address that other. At last he had sought her because he was miserable and irritable; and if it were wrong to inhale the sweetness of that rose himself, to which all his heart was directed — there was a something of comfort in enjoying the vicinity of one who '*si elle n'etoit pas la rose avait vécu près d'elle.*'

In short, to make an end, Mademoiselle's eyes had

never been opened; and to the day of Du Chastel's departure, she believed herself to be his secret favourite.

A marriage with him she should like very well, and she was not a little vexed that he had gone away without making the slightest advance to a negotiation of that nature. But she consoled herself with thinking, that until he had made his way a little more in the world, it would be neither prudent, nor, indeed, possible to entertain such a prospect — and besides, the delay allowed more time for ascertaining whether Mr. Marston was utterly impregnable or not. For delightful as the younger swain might be, there could not the shadow of a doubt exist, as to which of the two, in the event of the choice being offered, would be the more eligible bargain.

And accordingly, Mademoiselle spent her solitude at Donnington, considering plans, weighing chances, and imagining possibilities, when she was suddenly awaked from one dream at least, by the astounding intelligence that Mr. Marston was married.

It was actually in the newspapers. It was announced in these terms: "On Thursday, the 10th of August, John Marston, Esq., of Donnington Abbey, in the county of Lancashire, and Queen Square, London, to Maria Selina, daughter of Jacob Bean, Esq., of Sheffield."

Mademoiselle Fierville was still sitting with the newspaper in her hand, pondering upon the different

turns of fate below, and wondering who this daughter of Jacob Bean, Esq., of Sheffield, could possibly be, when the housekeeper, red as an enraged turkey-cock, which bird in several points of view she considerably resembled, burst into the room with —

“Who on earth would have thought it? — The hussey! Mademoiselle, please let me have a look at the newspaper... Who on earth would have thought it? — The hussey! the impudent puss! Ay, there it is — *Jacob Bean, Esq.*,” — with an hysterical laugh. “Why, he’s not even a master shoemaker — he’s a cobbler at Sheffield!” And poor Mrs. Honey-pot, quite overpowered with her emotions, black with envy, red with rage, boiling over with honest indignation at the thought, sank down upon a chair, letting the newspaper fall from her powerless hand.

“Why, what? what?” cries Mademoiselle. “Do you know anything of her?”

“Know her, the hussey! Why, was she not kitchen-maid here? — Nay, I don’t know if she wasn’t scullery-maid; and haven’t I given her many a cuff before now, for her saucy looks and answers — ay, hundreds of times! And she’s to be missis over me! — missis over me!”

And with that the tempest dissolved in rain, and Mrs. Honey-pot sobbed aloud.

“But I don’t understand,” says Mademoiselle, quite puzzled, “how it’s all come about. I never heard of

this person before; and Jacob Bean, Esq. — you don't call cobble — what's cobble — coal — what? — I don't understand — you don't call cobbles, esquires?"

"Esquire!" with a tone of ineffable scorn; "esquire! as much an esquire as I'm the queen — nay, less, for I'm a decent woman, at all events, and that's more than she is — a vile, wicked, shameless girl!... That's what people get by being virtuous in the world!"

"I'm glad she's virtuous, however," said Mademoiselle, with a little sentiment *à la Genlis*.

"*She* virtuous!" in a loud tone of triumph; for there was some comfort, at least, in knowing she was not *that* — that she had not deserved her good fortune. "*She* virtuous! why, she's a shameless, bold-faced vixen, without a rag of character left; and everybody knows what she's been to master these five years, at least... Why, bless you! there's four children."

"Oh!" said Mademoiselle, to herself, and began to understand the something she never could quite comprehend about Mr. Marston. "Well, Mrs. Honeypot," she went on, "I'm heartily sorry for all the family. As for myself, there is but one alternative (I shall write by this very post to Du Chastel, thought she). What do the rest of you mean to do?"

"I'm sure I don't know," sobbing again hysterically; "for as for having her as was my kitchen-maid missing it over me, it's what I shall find it difficult, I know, to bring myself to bear. But mine's a good place —

it's hard to leave it in advancing age," with a fresh burst of compassionate tears over her own sad fate; "and perhaps, out of love for my old master, I may consent for a bit, at least ... for what will that poor, ignorant thing know about housekeeping? — and she's made an honest woman of, at all events. By-the-by, I wonder what Miss Marston will do? She can never come back now. But she's a good fortune of her own, that's one comfort... I'm sure, if I had such good luck, nothing should tempt me even to *look* at the creature. But poor servants must live."

Mademoiselle Fierville, by that very day's post, wrote, as she had promised herself, to Armand Du Chastel, intending to begin by thus opening the communication, and see what would come of it. This is her letter, translated from the French.

"MADEMOISELLE FIERVILLE

"TO ARMAND DU CHASTEL.

"MY DEAR MR. DU CHASTEL,

"I flatter myself, from the kind and obliging disposition which showed itself whilst with us, and which testified to the generosity and sweetness of your character, that you will excuse me for giving you the trouble to read this little note, and thus interrupting for a few moments your interesting occupations.

"There have been great events since we had the

pleasure of seeing you here. Everything is changed — *de fond en comble* — and in the general overthrow, my little destiny has not escaped, but has been levelled to the earth with other things. In short, my vocation is at an end, and I have received notice from Mr. Marston to look out for some other arrangement, and resign myself to quit this house in a month.

“Mr. Marston has behaved liberally, I must own, upon the occasion, and I quit this place with a comfortable little sum to add to the savings I have been able to accumulate during a short, but not unindustrious life. Nevertheless, it is not my desire to remain idle; and if Mr. Armand Du Chastel should chance to know of any situation, consistent with my views and pretensions, it would be an act of friendship to me most gratifying, if he would please to think upon me.

“No doubt, Mr. Du Chastel will feel some natural curiosity to learn the causes of the unexpected and astounding (*étourdissant*) events which have taken place. I can only satisfy this natural desire for information, by informing him of what little has come to my knowledge.

“The rupture of all those agreeable relations which he found existing at Donnington Abbey, has been occasioned by a violent quarrel between Mr. Marston and his daughter. It is not for me to enlarge upon what is for ever to be lamented. The grounds of the quarrel were, I believe, such as often happen in the families of the English, so fond of liberty, but never take place in

France, where submission to the proprieties of things, and, above all, to the unlimited control of parents in that important matter, marriage, is without exception.

“I believe Mr. Marston proposed an alliance to his daughter most unexceptionable in every respect. It was with a man of large fortune, unquestioned honour, about her own age, and one known to her from childhood — yet he was met with a flat refusal. In vain, as I am informed, did the worthy (*le digne*) Mr. Marston demand a reason for the young lady’s unaccountable caprice — he could obtain none.

“There was a repetition the most obstinate of the refusal to obey, in spite of the urgent entreaties to which the father condescended. At last he became justly enraged at this *entêtement*, and his fury broke out in high words, as it was natural it should. The young lady’s temper is also rather high; she stuck to her rights as a daughter of proud Albion; and, in short, it ended by Mr. Marston turning her out of the house.

“So there was a terrible *fracas*, and everybody at their wits’ end, to know what would come next, and what they were to do; and whether she would ever come back again. The young lady herself hoped to do so, I dare say; for she went no further than Nurse Bond’s, who lives in the village of Donnington hard by — but if she did expect to return, she has deceived herself. Mr. Marston declared himself implacable; sent her clothes after her, and dismissed me from my situa-

tion, as I have said; allowing me to stay a month here, only on condition that I would not exchange a syllable with Miss Marston.

"All this, however, might have passed away, and she been restored, but for an event of which I have heard this morning, that renders the mischief irremediable. Mr. Marston, in the effervescence of anger, no doubt, has done the most inconceivable of things.

"He has actually gone and married himself to a young woman, once a servant in this very house; and afterwards — I am shocked to allude to it — accepting a situation far more disgraceful even than that of kitchen-maid could be — a situation, in short, which renders it impossible that Miss Marston should ever return to the house, where the new wife, and two children she already has by Mr. Marston, are expected in a short time; but I shall take care to strike my tent first.

"What is to become of Miss Marston, it is painful to think! I am sure I pity her from my heart. Thrown friendless upon the world, after all the luxury and expense to which she has been used.

"What Mr. Marston will do for her, nobody knows; but that little enough may be expected, when there is a *marâtre* of this description, and a second family in question, one may suppose.

"However, to end this narration, which has ran to a length I pray you to excuse, I will beg of you to believe me, &c. &c."

What Mademoiselle's private reasons were for entering into these details, may perhaps be suspected; but far was she from anticipating the effect her somewhat garbled narrative would produce upon him to whom it was addressed.

The letter was like a message from heaven.

Little thought he, or cared he for the fair writer, who flattered herself she held so important a place in his heart! He forgot her very existence, as his eye greedily devoured the lines in his hand.

You should have seen him, his rising colour, his flashing eyes, the trembling agitation of hope, ecstasy, conviction, and the rapture of a sudden resolution.

Yes, every syllable of the story enforced the same truth, making that a call, a peremptory call of duty and honour, which every sentiment of duty and honour had till then forbidden.

For his sake, she was an outcast; for his sake, she was penniless, defenceless, and without a home. Oh! but he would shelter her in his arms — struggle for her — slave for her — worship her — and by the intensity of his love, his devotion, make some faint, feeble return for what she had done for him.

It is no use attempting to describe him. He was perfectly wild with troubled, stormy delight.

To fly to her, to throw himself at her feet, to kiss those feet again, as once he had done before in all the bewildered transport of so undeserved and unexpected

a discovery! He could think of nothing — see nothing but Evelyn — discarded and homeless for his sake!

In less than an hour, he was upon the top of the mail coach, cursing the delay, though the horses were spanking on as fast as the best-appointed mail coach at that time in England could go.

It was ten o'clock at night when they rattled by the Park wall, and through the little street of Donnington village, and the coachman drew up a moment at the Black Bear, to deliver the letters, and allow Du Chastel and his portmanteau to descend.

Oh how his heart had been beating and choking him, as he recognized the well-known park wall, the belt and its particular trees, all crowded with memories. There he had seen her — there he had watched her at a distance — here again he had sat and thought of her — under that thick cedar he had flung himself down in a transport of anguish, and wept like a child for her. Glimpses through the belt shewed the water gleaming at a distance, in the brightest of moonlights, and the fair abbey sleeping there under its ancient trees, upon that soft, moss-grassy lawn.

He sprang from the coach, portmanteau in hand, and entered the little bar of the Black Bear. Luckily for him, he was at this place utterly unknown; he had never crossed its threshold in his life. He asked whether he could have a room and a bed; and the landlady, a portly dame, after a little scrutiny of his looks, which

decided her that he was a real gentleman, showed him into a clean, though modest apartment, next door to which was a neat little bedroom, at his service.

This affair arranged, he looked at his watch. A quarter past ten.

"Did Mrs. Pennant know one Mrs. Bond — who, he believed, lived in this village?"

"To be sure she did. Who didn't know Nurse Bond? She as nursed poor Miss Marston, of the abbey."

"He was come down upon business with Mrs. Bond. Was Miss Marston still residing with her?"

"Yes, poor young lady! she was there still, she believed; at least, she was there yesterday."

Could he send a note to Mrs. Bond? he wished to see her as soon as convenient; and he asked for pen and paper.

"Bless you, sir! Mrs. Bond has been in bed this hour. She always retires at nine."

"Perhaps the young lady who is staying with her, Miss Marston, might be up."

"Can't say for that," said Mrs. Pennant; "poor thing! she's not been used to such early doings, and she's not likely to have much turning to slumber and sleep just now; — but that's none of my business," she added, a little conscience-struck at opening herself upon such matters to a perfect stranger — for all the village took part with Miss Marston. "But I think, sir, if you'll take

my advice, you'll have a bit of supper after your journey, and put off writing your note till morning."

This recalled him to the most important part of all business in Mrs. Pennant's eyes — the ordering a meal. He begged her to give him anything she pleased for supper, but to send him pen, ink, and paper directly.

She brought it. He sat down, and scrawled impatiently these few hasty lines, almost illegible, and blotted all over.

ARMAND TO EVELYN.

"Forgive me, if at this moment I am the happiest man the universe contains. I know all. Need I say, that my heart, my life, my everything in existence is yours, and yours only and for ever; and that with the offer of my hand, I offer you all that the deepest love — the most intense desire to make you happy — and a gratitude far beyond words can do, to atone in some little degree for the immensity of the sacrifice you have made to truth, to principle, and — may I venture to say it? — to your own heart.

"YOUR ARMAND DU CHASTEL.

"I shall call at Mrs. Bond's door as soon as I can to-morrow, without exciting impertinent observation. If you admit me, I am yours for ever, and we part no more."

He directed the letter to Miss Marston, sealed it, enclosed it in another to Mrs. Bond, and then sallied forth for the chance of finding somebody up, and being able to deliver it immediately himself.

He easily got a direction to Mrs. Bond's; and made his way there through the visionary night.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Learn by a mortal yearning to ascend
Towards an higher object. — Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned chiefly for that end:
That self might be annulled. . . ."

LAODAMIA. — WORDSWORTH.

THE front of the small house occupied by Mrs. Bond was all in darkness, and appeared to be shut up for the night; but at the back of it two lights were gleaming, one in what seemed to be the kitchen, and another in an upper window, which commanded a view of the little garden, and through the white curtains of which, Armand could faintly distinguish a female figure going and coming, as if restlessly pacing the room.

The unerring divination of the heart, told him who it was.

He stood fixed to the spot for a short time, inhaling the joy, which the certainty of being once more near a loved one from whom we believe ourselves for ever parted, gives; watching that fleeting shadow, as it crossed and recrossed, appeared and disappeared; indulging the

blissful assurance that they were together again, and this time to part no more.

But he was re-called to himself, by seeing the light from the kitchen window vacillating, as if about to be taken away. He went up and knocked at the door.

He was answered by a voice in some trepidation, demanding "who was there at that time of night?"

"Only a messenger with a letter for Mrs. Bond, to be delivered immediately."

"Mrs. Bond was gone to bed these two hours."

"Was there a lady — a young lady — a Miss Marston, living with Mrs. Bond?"

"Yes; what of that?"

"It would do as well if the letter were given to Miss Marston — If the woman was afraid to open the door," for he began to suspect the nature of the maid-servant's fears; "he could put the letter through the casement, if she would open it a little; but it was of consequence it should be delivered to Mrs. Bond or to Miss Marston that very night."

Oh, the impatience of lovers!

"I have half-a-crown for your trouble, if you will do this for me."

Open sesame.

The casement was opened, and the letter taken.

Presently there seemed to be some little agitation in the room with the white curtain; but he could not make out much, from the uncertain shadow which at length

altogether disappeared. He stood watching some time, but the appearance did not return; and at last the light was extinguished.

The moon was setting, and had disappeared behind the woods, before he could persuade himself to leave the garden —

In the meantime the letter had been delivered to Evelyn. She was told that the man who brought it had requested her to open it. She knew the hand, and her heart began to beat so violently, that she was obliged to sit down upon the first chair by the door to prevent herself from falling.

The servant girl was about to shut the door and go away.

“Stay — who brought the letter?”

“A young man — as well as I could see — a gentleman, like. But he’s gone away.”

“You may go.”

It was impossible to open the letter before the servant girl; her hands trembled so, she could scarcely hold it.

She got to the contents at last, and her first impulse was to fall upon her knees, in almost an agony of gratitude, and return thanks, such as she had never in her life offered before.

They were restored to each other then! no more to be parted.

Her father’s marriage, of which she had heard with

equal astonishment and disgust, had, at least, released her from all obligations towards him, she thought, and had been the means of effecting that, which scarcely any other circumstance upon earth could have done. It had drawn from her lover a disinterested and honourable proposal, to be rewarded, not only by her worthless self, but by a fortune, which, though nothing extravagant, would raise him and his at once to independence.

Knowing this latter fact as she did, there was not a doubt about accepting Du Chastel's proposal; which, had she been as poor as he thought her, she would have felt almost insurmountable scruples in doing. All, with the exception of one cold, dark, unsatisfactory corner of her heart, which related to her father, and to her own conduct and violence, which she felt might have precipitated the catastrophe, was happiness ineffable.

Human happiness is rarely perfect even for a few brief moments in life. It is generally diminished, under the most favourable circumstances, by some fault or folly of our own — as was Evelyn Marston's now — still, upon the whole, she was *boundingly* happy.

The worth of her lover gave an assurance to the inner conscience, as to the justifiableness of her choice and of her persistence in it. *There* all was sound and satisfactory. She would have given anything she possessed, that she had done the thing better; that she had exercised more self-command; that she had found strength to carry out the good resolutions she had made — but

who can resist the force of long evil habits by a first resolution? She had soon forgotten hers, and had yielded to the vehemence of feelings, which had ended by literally a storm of passion.

There is hardly any comfort in having been right in the 'main, when we have been wrong in the mode — but there is some comfort, nevertheless. There is a comfort in all that is right; and she felt it.

And so she passed the night in great agitation, but intensely happy in the midst of it all; till at last, fairly wearied out, she fell asleep, and did not awaken till the sun was darting in at her windows, and the busy birds were chirping away upon every bough.

Then she started up.

It is, perhaps, one of the most painful moments of life, when, after a brief forgetfulness, we awaken to a renewed sense of sorrow; it is, perhaps, one of the brightest, when cheered, refreshed, and the nerves tranquillised by sleep, we open our eyes to joy.

What a world it seemed to the sensitive, fresh-hearted Evelyn, as she sprang from her pillow. The sun was risen very bright — but what was that, compared to the brightness of her spirit? The morning wind, which blew freshly through her window, was very exhilarating; but what was that, to the spirit within? The plants, the trees, the flowers, the birds, the two little kittens playing upon the tiny grass plat below, were

gladsome and gay; but what was that, compared to her young, immeasurable happiness?

Every least action, as everything around her, seemed filled with a spirit of new delight, from the sweetness coming through her open window, to the pleasure of gathering together the profusion of her waving hair — the arraying it round a face beaming with hope and peace, and the choosing among the different pretty articles of a wardrobe prodigal to excess, what might best suit the taste of her lover.

Joy made her good; joy made her pious. She fell upon her knees, and with an earnestness to tears which, perhaps, she had never felt before, poured forth her thanks to the Giver of all the bliss of a blissful world. Humble prayers to be forgiven for what she had done wrong succeeded; and humble promises to drive from her heart every bitter and adverse feeling; to make peace with her father upon any terms, and be his dutiful child to the end of her days.

Peace upon any terms did not, of course, include the sacrifice of that which was the source of all this good and joy. She never thought of doing that. Under her present circumstances, she did not believe that duty in the least demanded from her; and I cannot say that I think she was far wrong.

She was a little nervous and fluttered at the idea of meeting so soon; but all that was really awkward and distressing in the relations under which they stood, had

vanished. Nothing remained to be cleared up but his misconception with respect to her fortune; a charming mistake she should be in no hurry to remove. It put both quite in the right place; and, oh! the delight of, in due time, undeceiving the generous suitor, and endowing him with that to which he had been so nobly indifferent.

"My dear," said Nurse Bond, as Evelyn sat down to breakfast, "what's come to you? You seem all in a fluster; yet I never saw you look so pretty in my life. Dear me! I hope, poor love, you've had a little pleasant news. Something to make up for your troubles — You look so happy."

"Do I look happy, good woman? Well, I *am* very happy."

"I'm glad you can be — very glad," said Mrs. Bond, rather crossly, in spite of her professions. She was herself far from having digested Mr. Marston's marriage, though all for the poor child's sake, as she declared to herself; and she could not feel at all pleased to see that dear child apparently recovering from a misfortune, for which she did not intend herself to be — nor thought any one else ought to be — consoled.

"I'm glad to see you can be so happy, Miss Marston, after all; but your *true* friends find it more difficult to make up their minds to your troubles, than you yourself do, Miss Evelyn, it seems."

"Oh! dear, good woman, don't let us think of all that

disagreeableness now! Dear Bond, I'll tell you by and by what makes me so happy."

Listening all the time for the little door-bell. Jumping up from her chair, impatient to look out of the window; and then sitting down again, ashamed of her impatience, and afraid of being seen if he should be coming.

"Oh, dear! Miss Marston, don't think I'm sorry to see you happy. I'm sure I'm as glad as can be, only I *am* a little surprised."

A ring at the tinkling bell in the passage.

Starting up; sitting down again; colour changing rapidly; fluttering heart; sort of foolish fear lest the girl should send him away. What shall she do then? Mere vain terror of the over-excited nerves. The door opens.

"A gentleman, to speak to Miss Marston."

"Oh, show him in! Show him into the dining parlour — I'll come and speak to him there... Show him in there."

"Gentleman! Who in the name of fortune can that be?"

But the dining-room door closes, and she has already left the room.

It opens again, and a being radiant as the morning light presents itself, beaming with love, innocence, trust, and joy.

One such moment is enough to endow a life.

We shall not intrude upon the first sacred felicity when heart meets heart; the barriers of reserve and distance are thrown down, and it is one blissful flow of unbounded confidence, and interchange of thought and feeling ... when two made to be one, feel themselves one.

There was nothing to disguise now, and nothing was disguised. Only one thing did Evelyn keep back — her fortune. She let her lover enjoy the felicity of thinking that he was offering an asylum to one in all probability homeless, when he wooed her to be his. It made all so easy, so natural, so right. So she let him talk away of the future, and of the sacrifices she would have to make, and of his hopes, and his means, as happy lovers on equality talk; and she smiled to herself to think how it really was.

That night, however, our prudent Evelyn, who was now come to attach the highest value to a fortune, for which, till lately, she had not in the least cared, wrote to a certain old Mr. Frere, who she happened once accidentally to have heard was one of her mother's trustees; and really, except the amount of her fortune, this was almost all that had reached her upon the subject.

She wrote, therefore, to Mr. Frere, to ask for a little more definite information. An inquiry, which the circumstance of her father's degrading marriage seemed to render proper and natural.

She had seen Mr. Frere once, she recollected, at her aunt Fitzroy's; but that was all she knew of him. He was an old-fashioned sort of gentleman — an old bachelor — had seemed fond of her for the sake of her mother, and had made a few good-natured, but rather dull, jokes about being her trustee, and his intention to look sharp after any one she should marry.

Mrs. Fitzroy, the reader may as well be informed, was at this time at Rio Janeiro, having married, shortly after we saw her in London, a gentleman who was at this time holding an official situation there. This will account for Miss Marston having no place of refuge open to her at her aunt's house, when turned out by her father.

To return to the letter to Mr. Frere.

Evelyn recollected sundry of the above-mentioned dull jokes, which had vexed her proud and irritable spirit at the time. She hated such stale common-places most thoroughly; and she had taken up the idea that Mr. Frere was a meddling, vulgar, old twaddler, and so she felt an invincible repugnance to making him a confidant as regarded her present intentions. The only fact she wished to ascertain could be answered at once, without leading necessarily to any farther explanation.

Mr. Frere's letter was some days in arriving; but at last it came.

MR. FRERE TO MISS MARSTON.

"MY DEAR YOUNG LADY,

"I am confined to my bed by a sharp attack of rheumatic gout, or I would not have been so many days, I assure you, without answering your very proper and pretty letter.

"After the step my good friend, your father, has thought proper to take, equally to the astonishment and vexation of all his friends, I have nothing to say but that I am very glad to have had even the small share I took in your mother's settlement, by accepting a trusteeship on her behalf.

"Not that I can take any credit to myself for trouble expended upon that account, for I have of course had nothing to do in the business from that hour to this. The settlement was arranged with your grandfather's — mother's father's sanction — Mr. Marston being allowed the use of certain of the monies upon giving his bond for forty thousand pounds, to be paid to your mother upon his death; or, supposing he survived her, to be divided among such children as she might leave behind, each child to receive its several portion on coming of age. Mr. Marston, if I recollect right, not to be chargeable with interest between the mother's death and that date.

"Of course you being the only surviving child, the whole devolves upon you; and I must say, under existing circumstances, I rejoice that you have this inde-

pendence secured; for I am led to believe that the present Mrs. Marston, according to the fashion of the most worthless of her sex, aided by the infatuation of ours, exercises a very undue influence, and one very much to be lamented, over her now husband. This might have occasioned all sorts of unpleasant perplexities to you, if it had not been in your power to hold yourself independent of her.

"I hope in a few days to be up and about again, and to settle this matter to your satisfaction. I am ashamed to say I have forgotten the name of the solicitor employed; but I will write to Mr. Marston myself and obtain the necessary information, and see that you are put in possession of your property as soon as possible.

"In the meantime, do not hesitate to draw upon me for any money you may want at the present. You need make no scruple; first, because it is owing to the state of my health that you will not be put into possession quite so speedily as might be desirable; and secondly, as it will be in your power to repay me in the course of a few weeks at farthest.

"I shall be quite hurt if you will not make a friend of me in this as in every other acceptation of the word.

"Yours, faithfully,

"My dear Miss Marston,

"JOHN FRERE."

It was a life of remorse, great and small; and there was a little remorse for her hard judgment of Mr. Frere.

She must accept an obligation from him which was slight indeed, and which, but for these little twinges within, being so kindly offered, would have been with equal pleasure accepted. Now it occasioned a secret pain. But anything was preferable at this moment to applying to her father; indeed, she did not know where he was. The hundred pounds he had sent had already been mostly expended in paying a few old bills of her own; she must have a little ready money for the necessary expenses of her marriage. So she wrote to Mr. Frere a very pretty letter, which pleased the old gentleman extremely, and borrowed two hundred pounds. He sent the money by a check upon his banker, drawn with more satisfaction than any check I verily believe that he ever drew in his life, for Evelyn Marston had the gift of pleasing everybody.

Enviably gift!

Behold, then, the two lovers; their wedding-day fixed, and all their little arrangements happily made, under the influence of that charm which renders even the choosing a paper or selecting the pattern of a tea-cup a source of delight.

When it actually came to the planning where they should take a house, and what their little establishment ought to consist of, and when Evelyn saw the pain her

lover felt at the idea of the very, very modest scheme of economy, not to say of privation, which prudence would render necessary; then, and not till then, she persuaded herself to tell him with a smile that he need not be so scrupulous, for that he was not going to marry the Beggar of Bethnal Green, but a young lady with forty thousand pounds secured to her.

They by this time so thoroughly and entirely understood each other, and had so completely entered into that blessed confidence and unreserve, which is the sweetest, as it is the strongest tie between man and wife, that he received this intelligence with as much and just the same sort of satisfaction as if they had been struggling together for years. He accepted most gratefully, as one among so many gracious gifts bestowed upon him, the power of indulging the generous creature whose attachment was the pride and glory of his soul, in those little luxuries which custom had made almost necessities, and the idea of depriving her of which, had occasioned many a pang, and marred his almost perfect felicity.

She was delighted with seeing him take it so simply and easily. It was the last little reserve that had remained between them. Now, all was complete, and their bliss was as perfect as their hearts were faithful and true.

And so fled away a month from the time of her first entering Mrs. Bond's house, which was in a separate

parish from Donnington Abbey. And the day fixed for their marriage arrived.

But, long before that day came, Armand, who had felt considerable uneasiness at the idea of exposing his Evelyn to possible misconstruction, and yet who felt it impossible to tear himself away from her, had persuaded her to allow him to ask his friend, Anne Douglas, to join him at the little village inn. She might thus act as a sort of mother and *chaperon* to Miss Marston in her present peculiar situation, — a passage of life where some one female friend, mother, aunt, sister, cousin, something near and dear, seems almost indispensable.

She coloured when he mentioned the subject. She was a little susceptible and jealous of any reference to her present destitution. She felt as all young women of delicacy must have felt with regard to it.

“Oh, certainly! — undoubtedly! — if *you* think it right. Anything *you* think right; but who is this Miss Douglas?”

“You are not hurt at me, Evelyn? — not angry with me?” looking anxiously at the mounting colour of her cheeks.

“I am always afraid you are secretly blaming me.”

“Nay, my love; put ‘secretly’ out of your vocabulary. If I had reason to blame my Evelyn, I love her too entirely to do it secretly. Every thought of my heart is hers, and she knows it. Our situation is strange, my dear girl, and quite out of the common rule — by

no fault of ours — happily for us. Let this be an earnest of what my Miss Marston ...”

“Oh! now you are really angry — Miss Marston!”

“My own, then — of what she may expect through life. I feared it might vex you, yet I ventured to speak out. My love, when I risk the vexing you, I risk incurring the greatest pain that it is possible for me to feel; but I do it now, and will ever do it, when I think I ought. Sweet! generous! unsuspecting creature! But you are the mark of all the eyes in this little place, and I never have the enjoyment of walking out with you, but I feel I am doing wrong, so let us have Anne; she loves me, and I am sure she will come, and her presence will set everything right, till that blessed of all days arrives, when there can be nothing to be set right or wrong between us.”

“But who is this Anne Douglas? — Old or young? and what is she like?”

“Do you remember the night and day spent at my father’s house? Yes, I know you do,” as she lifted up her eyes to his, with a little reproachful — “You know whether I did or not —” expression.

“Yes, yes, I know you do; well then, Anne Douglas was ...”

“Oh! was she that dear, gentle, rather middle-aged lady, very tiny and very pale; and not pretty, but charming beyond measure — that was so excessively good to me then? Why did you not tell me that,

Armand, at first? Yes, I shall be glad to see her. I can't love people very easily, I believe, and I don't like to be with those I don't love, when I can help it, that is ... but I love her already, and shall love her more and more, I am sure. Oh! beg her to come, by all means, if she will be so very good; and to be my mother, and friend, and adviser, and fault-finder, as you dislike that disagreeable office so much, Armand. — I know well, nobody will ever find it a sinecure."

The doctor was dead, and with the death of her brother, Anne Douglas's means had been very much straitened; still she continued, by strict economy, to make a very narrow income, not only suffice for herself, but afford the means of exercising charity among her poor neighbours, whom the vicinity in which she had been born and bred threw in her way. Du Chastel knew she could ill afford to make the journey at her own expense, but his present prospects rendered all little matters of this sort of no importance. He had done for life with that close frugality which makes it a duty to weigh the cost of every trifle; and oh, what a relief he found it!

It was like being released from a strait bandage over the chest, which impedes motion, action, almost thought — he breathed freely once more, and his heart, no longer crushed and compressed by that cold hand of excessive indigence, expanded with a delightful freedom.

What he must have thought it right to have done under other circumstances, it is needless to inquire; as

it was, he wrote to his friend to request her assistance; a request which was cheerfully granted, and Anne Douglas was soon quietly quartered at the Black Bear.

The fancy Evelyn had taken to her at their first meeting years ago, strengthened into a cordial affection and an esteem approaching to reverence when they met again. She had been brought into communication with but few women in the course of her life, and it may be truly said, that among those few there was not one single woman of merit.

Merit is an attraction which draws its like towards it; but it must be by some fortunate accident indeed, when *demerit* attaches to itself worthy friends. Mr. Marston, with his low moral taste, and common-place view of life; his vulgar love of finery, luxury, shew; and especially of those conventional necessities, which he thought appertained to a man of fortune — had selected the persons who were to have charge of his daughter's education, in a way that might have been expected; and, if there was fortunately little really wrong in those put about her, there was little to win the affection, and nothing to ensure the respect.

We have seen how like some fine, vigorous plant, Evelyn had grown up in a wild, unchecked luxuriance, which had nevertheless a power about it, not without its value, and assuredly not without its charm. If she had learned little that was good, she had escaped what was radically false or bad.

A certain jealous pride upon the part of her father had prevented her associating much with other girls of her age. He looked upon those who happened to live within reach, and upon terms of visiting with his family — mostly small manufacturers — with considerable disdain, and as unfit to associate upon equal terms with his daughter; so Evelyn had had little communication with any of them; and had, in this respect, as in so many others, been left to the uninfluenced development of her faculties.

One of her good qualities was, a most warm, ardent admiration for what she approved and liked. We have seen how far enthusiasm, founded upon the deep, holy sentiment of respect for his moral worth, had influenced her with regard to Armand. The sudden sympathy which drew her to Anne Douglas was of the same nature.

These were happy days to all parties. Of Armand's felicity let lovers speak. Anne Douglas was very happy, in the prospects of the man she loved as women love a son — and, perhaps, had a still greater satisfaction — it was such a new and pleasant feeling — in the affectionate attachment of the beautiful and brilliant young creature, who seemed to think nothing of her own merits, and to have formed such a partial estimate of those of her friends.

It was now the latter end of summer, and the weather

was perfection. These three spent almost the whole of their time out of doors together.

They did not scruple to enter the deserted park at Donnington, and to enjoy the magnificence of the more distant woods, though they forbore to approach the house.

They used to walk or sit for hours under the splendid beech-trees for which Donnington was celebrated, which, towering like huge cathedrals of branches to an enormous height, stretched out their stately arms against the deep blue of the sky, casting their shadows upon the warm brown of the crisped leaves beneath them.

The women used to take their work — for Evelyn was beginning to learn the value of time, — and sat whilst Armand read aloud, or they would walk and talk discussing things and subjects of deepest interest, all new and delightful to her. It was like a fresh world; it was like being admitted into heaven, to the company of angels, so it seemed to her. Something so pure, and right, and true; something at once so imaginative and so instructive. Such a world of new thoughts were poured in upon her mind; such bright lights kindling, as it were, all around her. A strange sort of wooing, it may be thought, perhaps — but so it went on.

Anne Douglas, however, thought there never was a lovelier one, as, retaining her seat under the giant beech-tree, she would watch that pair at a little distance. Evelyn, walking by Armand's side, her eyes fixed upon

the ground, and a smile of ineffable love and sweetness upon her lips, as he, his head bent down and close to hers, poured that tale — for ever repeated into her ears, and for ever new — which opened to her the sense of the infinite.

He had to return to London for a few days, for his altered prospects justified, nay, he felt required, some alteration in his plans. He knew Evelyn disliked the idea of living in the streets, though she would have cheerfully submitted to it if necessary. Now he had the pleasure of selecting a pretty house for her, which stood in a large flower-garden upon the south side of London, and all that was necessary for enjoyment was united. The place was really charming. The rent, perhaps, a little too high; but he felt that nothing would conduce to his darling's daily comfort so much as a pleasant and well-situated house; their income would justify a little extra expense to secure this for her; and he promised himself, by the indefatigable pursuit of his profession, to set himself above the necessity of any considerations of this kind, by contributing his full share to the general means.

It was his wish, now he had provided for Evelyn's comfort, to do something to improve the situation of his father and mother. And he pressed Du Chastel to suffer him to engage a pretty house about a quarter of a mile from the one he had hired, and thus at once add to his

mother's comfort, and bring the two families near together; but this his father would not at present hear of.

"No, my son, that must not be. When such things can be done by yourself, and with justice to the claims of others, gratefully will I receive the proofs of a filial piety which has been the rich treasure of my life. But I cannot take a farthing from this dear girl, who has made such sacrifices to her affection for you."

"Oh, you do not know her."

"Yes, but I think I do; and it is because I think I know her, that I will not take advantage of a generosity of temper which you may well glory in, as I see you do. Let us remain here, my boy," he went on, seeing Armand turn away disappointed for Evelyn, as well as for himself. She had thought with so much pleasure of doing this. "Don't be hurt about it, my good fellow; have a little patience with your mother and me: there is no knowing how greedy and grasping a couple of old people may become as they approach their dotage. Explain this to your sweet partner — to my dear, dear daughter. We will see by-and-by what can be done."

CHAPTER IX.

"Ere thy locks of golden light
Change to winter's snowy white,
And old Care has passed his plough
O'er the sunshine of thy brow. . . .
Ere the rose has left thy cheek. . . .
Let thy wanderings be free
As the butterfly and bee,
And throughout the May-time hours
Live upon the sweetest flowers."

POEMS BY CAPERN. — FROM THE EXAMINER.

A FINE morning as ever dawned it was, that shone upon Evelyn Marston's wedding-day.

The sun was sparkling upon every little casement in the village; the flowers in every garden were displaying their gaudiest colours; the trees, in the more distant woods, were waving their tops gilded by the sun's rays; the bees were humming, and the bells of the little church were ringing merrily, merrily.

The plan was, that the party, consisting of the married pair and Anne Douglas, who officiated as sole bridesmaid, should make, according to the fashion of those days, a tour together to the lakes, and after spending a little time enjoying the scenery there, return direct to London.

They were to travel in a hack-chaise, it being the first time Miss Marston had ever entered that clattering

and most intolerable of vehicles; but she cared not the least for that or anything of the sort.

True love is a sweet magic, that turns everything to gold.

She had half of her two hundred pounds left still, which she gave to Armand to help to pay the piper, as she said, and which he would have refused, for he had the greater part of the money received from Mr. Marston for the saloon still in his pocket; but she looked so seriously hurt and disappointed, that there was nothing for it but to repair his mistake as fast as he possibly could, by putting the money in his purse.

"Besides," she said, "I have run a bill or two at the old places for a few things I wanted for my wedding clothes, and you will have to pay my debts, — you know we are all one now. I did not trouble myself about them, for I have been of age six months, so I suppose there will be something due to me in arrear, which will clear all that."

He had used every entreaty in his power to persuade her to have all her money settled upon herself; but she positively refused to allow a single farthing to be tied up out of Armand's power. She chose it to be his, she said. She chose, with fond woman's love of dependance, to receive everything from his hands. They almost came to a quarrel about it. On this point she was like a wilful child. She would have her own way, and he was forced to submit at last. Anne Douglas comforting him

with the consideration that by making a will leaving everything, without exception, to his wife, he might himself, in another manner, fulfil the purpose he had in view.

And so the bells rang merrily, and presently Mrs. Bond's door opens, and the little girls and boys, and men and maidens, who stood assembled upon the green, with broken furze and broom-branches, now out of flower, and pretty blue-bells and pink centaury now in full flower, and black horned sheep, and stunted, picturesque-looking cows; the little girls and boys, some on the green, began to scatter flowers, and others to take off their hats, and look with all their eyes at the forthcoming bridal party.

It consisted of only five people.

The bridal pair and their somewhat reverend-looking bridesmaid, the surgeon of the village, a venerable old man, who had attended Miss Marston from a baby in all the vicissitudes of measles and hooping-cough, &c., who had been asked to give the bride away, and old Mrs. Bond herself, who, in a flowered silk stiff as buckram, closed the little procession.

The bride in her white dress, quaint, yet picturesque, as dresses at that time of day were — had covered her face with a rather thick veil; for she did not quite like this walking through a crowd of men, women, and children. It seemed a pity she did so; for, except Armand himself — and who cares to look at the bridegroom on

a wedding-day? — the members of the bridal party were not very ornamental.

Evelyn could not help feeling a little; and Anne Douglas and Mrs. Bond felt very much, that this was not quite the way in which the once proud heiress of Donnington Abbey ought to have been attended on such an occasion. But it was only a passing thought with her; and with a cheerful submission to things not quite to her mind, which she was beginning to learn, she reflected in her simple philosophy — that everything was mixed in this world, and that if this wedding-day had its disagreeables, what would it have been with carriages-in-four, saucy footmen with favours, company without end, and an immense wedding-breakfast?

So she soon cleared away all little regrets of this kind, and stood by the side of her lover with a cheerful confidence within, that she was doing wisely and rightly, which, if any thing could have added to Armand's cup of happiness, would have filled it to overflowing.

And so the old surgeon stumbles about and gives her away; and so they are married; and they come out of the church again, arm-in-arm, man and wife, and the bells burst forth anew into joyous peals, and the sun looks more brilliant than ever, and all things brighter and gayer; and the men and maids declare they are the handsomest couple that ever was seen; which the clergyman confirms by the oft-repeated assertion, that they are the handsomest couple he ever married; and the hack-

chaise stands ready at the little gate of Mrs. Bond's garden; and having put on her travelling dress and taken a cup of chocolate prepared by Anne Douglas' own hands, down the bride comes again, looking, as he thinks, like something more than earthly, and he puts her into his chaise with Anne Douglas, and jumps in himself, and the postboy goes rumbling along over the far-stretching common, with its tiny bells of blue, its pink centaury, its black-horned sheep, its picturesque cows, and its broom and furze tangles, extending many a mile — and commanding, as the road winds onwards, a noble view of wide-extended country and distant mountains. All at once there is a burst of Donnington Abbey, with its noble expanse of water, its woods behind woods, its spreading lawns, and crowding groups of deer, before them; at the sight of which Armand presses Evelyn's hand and sighs; and she returns the pressure and smiles.

* * * * *

How they enjoyed the Lakes together, needless were it to tell.

They were both fresh as two unspoiled children; for though she had been surrounded with luxury from her childhood — of the best luxuries provided by the All-merciful for his creatures, her share had been very scanty.

Liberty! The liberty that dwells among the fresh airs of the mountains, wholesome exercise, beautiful

varieties of wild scenery — such as the lovely Lakes of Cumberland afford — of this she knew nothing. Still more was she a stranger to the happiness of living with one who truly loved her, and whose mind reflected upon hers was calling forth and expanding those faculties within, which had been lying dormant for want of due exercise. There is no pleasure a woman, such as this, can possibly receive like that of being led and instructed; her education, as it were, completed by communion with the man she loves.

Everything about Armand was delightful to her. The sweet and polished refinement of his manners, his genius, his cultivation! and more than all, his deep and serious piety. This had put, as it were, the finishing stroke to her deep reverential esteem.

A new world — holy, mysterious, intensely interesting — was unfolded before her. Forms and shadows, and vague notions, were exchanged for an awful sense of actual reality and serious faith. And the germs of all the most sacred dispositions of our nature, long lying insensible in her soul, were awakened to life under these most propitious influences.

Tender these young shoots were at first, and feeble, but every day added to their wholesome natural growth and strength.

They used to sit among the mountains, imbibing all the poetry of the scene. Armand drawing indefatigably; for now he was happy and his mind at ease, the passion

for his art seemed to acquire fresh strength. No longer tormented with the feeling that he must labour for his daily bread, and to secure the little comforts which were almost necessities to his mother — that painful struggle between the disinterested nature of true art — and the duties of a generous prudence — his genius seemed to gather new strength. The Pegasus was released from the dung cart, and spread freely his celestial pinions.

Whilst his pencil was thus employed, Evelyn would read to him from Shakespere, Milton, Cowley, &c., — selected passages from the first of our English classics.

Perhaps with a greater delight, because they were mostly new. It was charming to see how her heart and intellect responded to everything, what enjoyment she found in these pure and simple pleasures!

But I stop myself. The description of felicity is tedious to others. There is a sameness in it which fatigues the attention of the stander-by. Yet I have a pleasure in endeavouring to arrest such moments, when all is not only happiness — but *good*. Not present enjoyment alone, but preparation for a still higher future; such as man's life in its best aspect is, and ought to be.

I love to see that fine creature casting off one by one her faults and weaknesses, and coming forth, brave, kind, loving, blessing and blest; and I like to think of that courageous, self-denying, talented young man, gradually throwing off the weight which had so long oppressed him, and learning by degrees to feel secure

in his joy; and also upon that good and dear woman, without an atom of selfishness in her whole composition, who — rare, rare, gift — actually could enjoy happiness, looking at it through other people's eyes.

But she too had her own particular share.

The love with which she had inspired Evelyn, the honest confidence, esteem, and playful fondness which she met with from her, was a very real felicity to the lonely and loving-hearted woman.

One great pleasure of Evelyn's was to make Anne Douglas relate old histories of the French Protestants. The mind and memory of this pious woman, it is needless to say, were stored with them. An heroic history it was, which no generous heart can listen to without imbibing something of its brave contempt of suffering for conscience sake; cheerful self-denial, ready sacrifice, and love and faith in God.

These tales, so pathetic and so noble, at once, perhaps, did more for Evelyn than all the rest. She drank them in with all the avidity of a kindred nature, and was thus, unknowingly, preparing herself, if need were, to suffer too. There seemed little probability, however, of her being called to this test, for never did lot appear more securely happy than hers. It was the enjoyment of an easy mediocrity, with all the pleasurable excitement and interest which an artist's profession yields to

those who are in one sense independent — and yet not altogether independent — of it.

* * * *

It was a proud moment when Armand presented his young wife to his parents.

He saw at once in his father's eye, by the flash of astonished pleasure with which he met his new daughter, how much her first appearance had charmed him.

She, on her side, was equally pleased.

Du Chastel had found everything he most approved and liked, when, to tell the truth, judging from past history, and distrusting a lover's encomiums, he had not anticipated much.

She had expected all she could imagine of best: but she found still more.

Madame Du Chastel lying languid upon her couch, for her infirmities were gradually increasing, took Evelyn's fair hand, kissed and blessed her.

Armand and his wife returned to their own home in the evening; and as they went along, Evelyn opened her heart; and began to talk of the old schemes upon which she had dwelt with so much pleasure.

"Why, Armand, this can never be. We cannot have a sweet cottage upon this delicious common, and your father and mother be left living in that odious dull house, at that detestable Islington. You can't and don't mean that, Armand. I had no idea — bad as I feared

it was — that it could be so bad. Why, I could not exist there for a week; and your mother so delicate, and your father such a man! . . . Do you know what I have been thinking of, Armand? That villa, a short quarter of a mile off. We passed it to-day. It is to be let. It is not quite dark yet; let us have a look at it this very evening.”

He did not speak; he was so delightedly watching the rapid changes of her countenance.

“Be it so, my heart’s treasure. If you can but persuade my father. He is a proud man is my father.”

“He will be persuaded! He will take it from his children. He will accept it from us! Why, Armand! You know, and he must know, that one of my greatest pleasures in the thought of our delicious money was, that such a man as your father need no longer languish in a detestable lodging-house, but be, in some degree at least, restored to his own element — his native element of elegance and refinement. I am sure we shall both of us come to loathe that sweet little hermitage of ours, if he is to remain in such a horrid place, which if I were condemned to, I believe it would positively suffocate me.”

He looked at her; and there was an anxious expression in his beautiful eyes.

“Then if we had not had this delicious money, as you call it, I could not have made you happy after all, Evelyn. I am very grateful for that money then.”

"That's unkind, Armand; you ought not to take me so. You know ... no, you will never know — what ... but I won't boast of virtues which, heaven be praised! I shall never be called upon to exercise. Well, of course you won't be vexed with me for being very glad we can be as we are, and for resolving never to rest till your father and your mother are as comfortable. I shall enjoy nothing till then. Not even you, my sweet adorable flower-garden, and my little conservatory and our elm and oak trees, and our tiny lawn, and my aviary, and my dear birds, and my paroquette and all the darling things provided by my naughty, naughty lover... No, Islington is an abominable place, and your father's house in that disgusting row perfectly unbearable; but if he will not come to me, I will positively go to him; — so let us go and take the house at once — to-morrow."

"Have it your own way," was the only answer, with a look ineffable.

It was quite a different affair, and he felt it so, that he should himself make use of Evelyn's fortune for the benefit of his father — or that it should be her own spontaneous gift — and upon such conditions alone could he hope to have it accepted. But what she gave words to he had silently felt with much pain that very evening, namely, the contrast between his father's and mother's home and his own; and he had been reflecting

with sadness upon the time that must, in all probability, elapse, before he could do much to improve it.

The generous vehemence of Evelyn, however, had now driven away all scruples as to the employment of her money in this manner.

The next morning, before he went to town — for at present he still kept his old quarters as a studio — the two walked together to the place.

It proved to be a very comfortable house, somewhat larger than their own, which pleased Evelyn very much, though she declared the garden was not half so pretty; but she promised herself so much amusement in beautifying it, and was so full of schemes, that Armand, in addition to his other satisfactions, had that of thinking that she was provided with a source of constant interest and amusement in these plans dedicated to the comfort of others. There was, in fact, here a good deal to be done. At his own home, in his anxiety to have everything for her sake as near perfection as possible, he had left one want unsupplied — that of employment — there was really nothing to improve.

She was all impatience to begin, and made him promise to call and take the house as he passed by the agents on his way to town; and he was but too well pleased to obey her.

She had thought before this that nothing could be added to her happiness; but she found that was not so.

The new occupation was like an added charm to the whole of her happy life.

It was so delightful, not to have a thought for herself, and to be entirely occupied for others.

For there was no return upon self in this. She thought only of Du Chastel; the man she so revered and admired; and of his wife languishing under the effect of sufferings for a noble cause. She was bent upon heaping every comfort and compensation upon them; and surrounding them with all she herself thought most delightful. But one thing, which in her disinterested care for them she did, was a real act of self-denial. She would have liked to have had the whole completed, and to have brought them to it as a pleasant surprise: but the beauty of such surprises is often rather impaired by a little spice of selfish pleasure which mixes up in them; and she would not delay their comfort a day in order to enjoy this pleasure. She made her husband take her again to Islington; and there she almost threw herself at Du Chastel's feet, to tell him that the house was actually engaged, and entreat him to come.

Du Chastel was not a man to be insensible to this conduct, or from a false pride to refuse such proofs of duty and affection. In the course of a few days he and his wife were established at the new house, and he had the extreme pleasure of seeing Madame Du Chastel lying on her couch by a French window opening to the ground inhaling the delicious air, enjoying the wholesome light-

someness of the room — its space, and quiet — and looking as she had not done for years. Whilst outside, there was his new daughter to be seen busy with an old man she had already engaged as their gardener — measuring, and digging, and planning a garden and plantation for the next year. For this she had already provided a multitude of flowers in pots, from a neighbouring nursery-man, managing to improvise a garden at the latter end of summer.

The possession of these was an especial enjoyment to Madame Du Chastel; for they were extremely beautiful, and so expensive, as to have been quite beyond her means even when in easy circumstances. Of course, since their retirement to Islington, a pot of common geranium or so, from time to time, had been all with which her husband or her son could afford to indulge her.

Her passion for flowers had been a feeling never betrayed — as are the secret longings after the quite unattainable — but now it was indulged to its full extent. It was affecting to see the enjoyment she received, and Du Chastel could scarcely retain his tears at her unaffected ecstasy, when he thought of the years in prison, the sober dullness of Spital Fields, and the melancholy ugliness of Islington, all so cheerfully and uncomplainingly endured by a creature with so exquisite a perception of such pleasures.

"You love flowers very much, then, my dear?" he said.

"I did not know myself how much I loved them till I had them," she answered, burying her face in an immense nosegay of the finest, which, in a china vase, stood upon a table near her. "I really did not know, happily for me, what enjoyment there could be in life till to-day. It is like heaven — perhaps too much so — one must not love this world too well."

"You have made one of us very happy, my dear," said Du Chastel to Evelyn, whom he joined in the garden.

She lifted up her face, all flushed, under an enormous hat, and red, and almost ugly with hard work, for she had been labouring, might and main, with her usual impetuosity.

"Are you pleased?" she said; "that's right."

"Your mother is happier than I thought it possible for anything upon this earth to make her. I thank you, my dear Evelyn, for giving me this satisfaction. Hers has been a life of sacrifices."

"I am so glad; and you, dear papa Du Chastel, do you like it? — Promise me you will like it, and be happy too."

"It would not be very easy to help being that," he said, with a look that set her heart bounding.

Surely there is no felicity like what she felt —

Full of love, overflowing with esteem and admira-

tion for them all, and the dispenser of so much enjoyment to those who had suffered so nobly and so long.

It was like the ministry of an angel — and she appeared like a ministering angel to them. Never was anything so fascinating (I hate the abused word) as she was at this period of her life. She really seemed to have got possession of the enchanted cestus. She dazzled them all. She swam in an atmosphere of love — delicious intoxication of the heart! and she worked away, whilst under her efforts everything seemed to assume new aspects of beauty and comfort. Du Chastel was sometimes almost uneasy at the lavishness of her expenditure, for she would spare nothing upon them — but he did not like to interfere. He knew that the place in itself was so small, that her prodigalities could be no very great drain upon an income such as hers; and there was something he felt to be ungracious in preaching economy to this generous extravagant, when the money thus saved would be his son's.

He saw her too wholesomely happy in thus flinging blessings from her horn of plenty, to find in his heart to preach prudence.

Prudence would come when needed he doubted not, for the excellent good sense which lay beneath the brilliant liveliness of her temper, had not escaped his observation, and had completed his satisfaction.

And so she went on spending her money, making happy and being happy. However, some way or other

a good deal of money was spent; bills began to come in, and she to hear voices call not quite in character with Paradise, and to wonder she had no letter from Mr. Frere.

There was a sort of feeling about Armand which made it impossible for him to begin the subject of her fortune with her. He must leave all that to herself. She had communicated Mr. Frere's answer to him; had positively refused to accede to his proposal of a settlement and had never mentioned the subject afterwards.

The fact was, she was too entirely happy to trouble herself about it. She concluded, as a matter of course, that the men would settle all that among themselves and that she should hear from Mr. Frere when the money was to be paid.

With the usual delicacy of those unaccustomed to business, she would have detested the idea of appearing the least greedy or impatient in any matter where money was concerned, and would have refrained from writing even if she had recollected it, which she did not.

She thought, no doubt, a vast deal about her delicious forty thousand pounds, as she termed it; but she was in no hurry to get hold of it — there it was, and it would come in due time, as summer comes without our having anything to do in bringing it on.

But now she had spent a good deal of money and ran herself into debt; and she was astonished at the amount of the bills that began to arrive.

The elder Du Chastel was of course entirely in ignorance as to the state of her finances. He was all the day away from home, and not in the least aware that everything, according to his own practice, was not paid for in ready money. Armand could not and would not ask questions.

He was aware of the state of the case, but felt it utterly impossible to interfere. He ought to have done so — but he really could not, and that large fortune of hers entirely in his power. She must, and she should, do exactly what she would with it. Like his father, also, he satisfied himself with thinking that the place was so small, with all her plans, she could not spend anything very enormous upon it; and indeed, there was a moderation and good taste in her proceedings, which was a warrant that though liberal to prodigality, there was no senseless extravagance in her schemes. A few hundreds taken out of her capital, if need were, would set all right, and no great harm done.

He should soon be able to replace the money by his professional exertions; for one thing he had resolved on, to settle every farthing belonging to her upon herself, as soon as ever it should come into his power.

CHAPTER X.

"Post equitem sedet atra cura."

LATIN DELECTUS.

So, whilst Armand, busy with his pencil, puts this subject of money aside, and Du Chastel, whom nothing can persuade to give up his clerk's place, sits at his desk all the day, bills begin to come in in a very disagreeable manner, and she has now no millionaire of a father to send them to, secretly proud of his daughter's extravagance, and of his own power to disregard it. She felt that she must stand to the payment herself, or hand them over to one to whom troubles she had been accustomed to look upon as laughing matters, would be subjects of anxious and painful importance; at least, till this delicious forty thousand pounds of hers was paid.

She could not bear to worry Armand with these things when he came home of an evening, exhausted with that peculiar species of exhaustion which follows the labour of composition — longing for, needing, absolutely requiring — rest of nerve and brain. She, in her love — that divining love which teaches everything concerning its object, had early learned to understand what this state was, and it had been her delight to minister, by every tender provision and affectionate invention, to that rest of soul — that almost sensual indolence the body at such a time requires.

When Armand returned it was as to an Eden of peace, such as can long exist only in poetic dreams. Even love, such as hers, can secure this to a man but for brief intervals of time; but she improved the day before her, and worked the machine of life, so that nothing cross, vexatious, or irritating should invade the sacred repose of genius.

So she hid the bills, and smoothed her somewhat anxious brow, and resolved to say nothing about the matter, but to put all delicacy in her pocket, and write to Mr. Frere.

She especially loved delicacy about money matters, and was upon that subject almost unreasonably proud. But her husband's rights and comforts were in question, and pride and delicacy were given to the winds.

EVELYN TO MR. FRERE.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have been hoping every day to hear from you, and that a letter addressed to me at good Nurse Bond's, would tell me you were better, and in a fit state to receive my *grand* secret. I did not like to trouble you with my affairs till I knew that; for as I had made my choice, and as nothing could alter my determination, I thought it was of no use to ask advice, or even your sanction, in spite of the jokes of old days. Well, then, I am married, and to a man of the highest personal merit, as well as of an ancient family, and unblemished

descent, which I believe you care for. He has every perfection in the world but one, which was the last I needed to regard — he has no money but what he makes himself; and that is not much and comes in very uncertainly. But I, thinking that I had plenty, have been rather extravagant in one or two things — which, after all, if I had to do, I should do again, so I need not pretend to be the least bit sorry. But I should be glad to pay for my own fancies with a little of my own money; and if you could be so very kind as to get it for me without inconveniencing my father, I should be greatly obliged to you.

“My dear Sir,

“Ever truly yours,

“EVELYN DU CHASTEL.”

She waited with a good deal of impatience for an answer to this epistle, but it was several days before she received one.

Her own letter was then returned to her in an envelope, deeply lined with black, and with a note, in a delicate female hand, containing these words: —

“DEAR MADAM,

“I am sorry to inform you that my uncle, Mr. Frere, died last night. He had received your letter a few days ago, and had been able to peruse it. He was very fidgetty, and anxious to answer it, but he did not

communicate it, and refused, as in ordinary cases he had done, to dictate a reply to me, saying there was no great hurry — when he was better, he would write himself. He appeared a good deal worried with its contents. On the Saturday night he found himself suddenly growing worse, and upon the doctor, in answer to his questions and anxious demands for the truth, declaring him to be in danger, he called me to his bed-side, and showing me the letter under his pillow, said I was to take it and return it unread to the address which he gave to me; and inform you that he had written twice to your father upon the business there mentioned — but had received no answer, and feared his letter had miscarried — and that as it was now impossible for him to do more, he would beg of you to write without delay to your father, when everything, he was sure, would be settled immediately to your satisfaction. Even this little exertion seemed to be too much for my poor uncle, who soon after fell into a sort of sleep, in which condition he breathed his last, to the unspeakable grief of all his friends, &c.

[So on for a page more, concluding in the usual manner, and signed]

“ISABELLA FRERE.”

This was a shock.

She felt the loss of Mr. Frere much, for she had begun to look upon him as her friend and as the sole

dependence upon her side of the question; but that was little compared to the pain almost approaching to horror, with which she contemplated the idea of addressing her father for the first time, after all that had passed, upon such a subject.

So anxious as she had been, when the communication was again opened between them, that it should be in a softened and gracious spirit upon both sides, and now, to appear in such an unamiable light! making the first advances only to obtain her money! Besides, she had too much quickness and discernment into character not to have perceived that liberal to herself, and fond of spending money as Mr. Marston undoubtedly was, there was nothing put him more out of humour than to be asked to pay it. He gave her large sums from time to time; but when she had once ventured to ask him for her allowance which was in arrears, she had met with such a reception as had determined her never to do so again. She took her remedy by running up bills, which her father paid when she was not present; and she was spared the scene which usually accompanied the humble and obsequious prayer of some unfortunate tradesman to have his account settled.

Numbers of people have more or less of this unreasonable injustice about them — ready enough to spend, and most unwilling to pay.

Evelyn was not much accustomed to do disagreeable things because they ought to be done. She lingered and

hesitated about a week longer, and then the state of her affairs became so urgent, that there was no remedy; and write to her father she must.

So one morning, as soon as Armand and Du Chastel had started for town, and she knew there was no danger of being interrupted, she resolutely sat down to begin this unpleasant task, having first locked the door.

Her little writing-table stood in a window, which gave a view of her pretty garden, and which was now open. Through it she looked upon the two or three noble trees belonging to the little domain, their branches gently waving up and down in the soft wind. The flower-garden full of carnations, china-asters, geraniums, and other later summer flowers, was most gay and cheerful. The bees working in some glass hives which Armand had procured for her, and which were a never-failing source of delight to her inquiring and active spirit, were busy at their tasks among the flowers; little birds were creeping about, without seeming to be afraid of the beautiful Angora cat which lay basking under the window in the sun. A Japan peacock, which, with his mate, had been lately added to her collection, was sweeping his brilliant many-eyed train over the grass-plot; her own little Bully, in his gilded cage, was singing his merry heart out; and her green paroquet was climbing about in a white rose-tree, that festooned the side of the house where she was placed.

She sat there, paper before her, and pen in hand;

sometimes biting the quill, meditating how best to begin; sometimes starting up, to look after the proceedings of one pet or another; then drawing chair, table, everything as close to the window as she possibly could, that she might drink in copious draughts of the enjoyment which scenes like the present afforded her.

She was so very happy! Life was such a beautiful precious, complete thing, in spite of all her troubles! Her spirit was so thoroughly harmonized, and all within so peaceful, that the little nervous irritation with which she had seated herself to her task subsided, and she felt that sweet confidence which leads one, in a temper such as hers, to believe in the diffusion, far and wide, of that element of love in which they are rejoicing, and in a universal sympathy and good-will upon all sides.

So after one more visit to the window; one more putting out of her head to savour the fresh air, and the sweet, faint smell of the flowers; one little word more to puss and the peacock;—she sat down resolutely, dipped her pen in the ink, and thus began:

“MY DEAR FATHER,

“I have been very sorry, &c.”

“No ... That is not it exactly.”

Tears up the sheet, and begins again.

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I am truly repentant, &c."

"No..."

Tearing up the sheet, and beginning again.

I believe half-a-dozen at least had been torn up before one was finished.

She did not like this much better than the others; but she was arrived, through mere weariness, at that point when every fresh attempt that is made only seems less successful than the last.

This was the letter as it stood finally: —

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I am sure you will believe me when I say how very, very much pain I have felt in the recollection of what passed between us a short time ago.

"I think still — and I am sure you will not be angry with me for saying so — that I was not wrong in taking the resolution I did; but I was exceedingly wrong in the manner in which I asserted it; and I humbly beg your pardon with all my heart, for my rudeness and violence, and I hope you will forgive me.

"You will also, perhaps, be inclined to view with indulgence the step I have taken. I was so unhappily situated, though in great measure, owing to my own fault, I acknowledge — and I think you will be the more inclined to pardon me when I tell you, that all my hopes and anticipations of good and happiness have

been far more than realised. The great personal merit — to say nothing of the high and unblemished descent of those with whom I have connected myself, will, I trust and believe, atone in your eyes for the, as regards myself, very trifling disadvantage of being poor.

“So forgive me, dear sir — forgive your Evelyn, and receive her into favour once more, and she will never, never displease you by the violence of her temper again. She thinks she can promise this now. She has learned better things, she hopes, from the admirable examples with which she is surrounded.

“And now, my dear father, I come at last to that part of my letter which it is so disagreeable to me to write — that if it had not become an urgent duty, which I owe to many innocent people, I think I could never have brought myself to do it. Mr. Frere was so good as to say, that he would spare me this great pain, and take the writing to you upon himself; but poor Mr. Frere died the third of this month; and though he had written to you twice, not knowing your precise address, he fears his letters may have miscarried.

“I believe you are expected at Donnington this week, and so I venture to address you there.

“And now, my dear father, the mention of Mr. Frere's name will have opened to you the business upon which I am now obliged to write myself. Will you be so very kind as to tell me who I am to apply to, and what steps I ought to take, to be put in possession of

my mother's settlement? I hope you will not think me wrong or indelicate in first mentioning the subject. I have often heard you say, that in business a man knew nothing of friends or relations; and therefore I hope you will think I am right in attending to it. I am indeed constrained to do so; for, knowing of this money, I must confess to you that I have been perhaps a little imprudent in laying out certain small sums in a manner it is impossible for me to regret, yet which has exposed me to applications from various tradesmen, who all say that they have heavy payments to make, and want their money; and you may conceive, my dear papa, how very dreadful it is to me to put poor men to inconvenience through my want of foresight. And I feel this more than ever, now that I know a little by experience what a horrid thing it is to owe money and not be ready to pay. So, indeed, I shall be excessively grateful if you will put me in the way, as soon as you conveniently can, to get my money. And now, my dear father, let me repeat my sorrow for my many, many faults, to you and everybody, and beg you to accept this submission from your ever-affectionate daughter,

"EVELYN DU CHASTEL."

* * * *

The letters did not usually come in of a morning till the gentlemen were gone to town. She was glad of it

upon this occasion, for she wished to receive the anxiously-expected one from her father when she was by herself.

Having once broken the ice, the tide of natural affection flowed full and free again. She hoped now for a hearty reconciliation between them. Though she had not said it, she relied upon his own feelings to show him, that if *she* had offended against *him*, he had far more really and essentially injured her, by the wife he had introduced into the family. She relied upon the inherent justice of human nature for suggesting all that might be urged upon her side; her own business was to make the best atonement for her share of fault, by a candid confession and entreaty for forgiveness.

So she awaited the arrival of the letter with only additional impatience, because she felt all would be right then, and the painful wound in one corner of her heart finally healed; for it is most certain that the more she advanced in moral worth, and the tenderer and better she grew, the more the misunderstanding with her father weighed upon her.

Three days — four days elapsed — at last, the letter came. She seized it with an impatient hand. This time she did not sit down to read it by the pleasant open window of her little drawing-room, but running up into her bed-room and bolting the door, she knelt down by the side of the bed, and read as follows: —

MR. MARSTON TO HIS DAUGHTER.

"I did not get your letter till yesterday, or I should have answered it sooner.

"I am, of course, very much gratified by your expressions of regret for conduct I shall ever think perfectly and entirely inexcusable. Nevertheless, I might have forgiven what then passed; but I cannot forget, though you seem altogether to do so, that you have, to the unpardonable violence of words, added the more serious undutifulness of acts such as no parent will, or, in my opinion, ought, to forgive.

"I am very glad you have got among such extraordinarily excellent and admirable people, who are repairing the effects of the *remarkably* bad education you seem to think you received in your father's house and, of course, the very bad example set you by that father, as you appear to imply, when you please to allude to one of his sayings, in, I must say, what I think a satirical and insolent manner.

"But I have no wish to recriminate. After all that has happened, the less we see of each other the better. I am happy in the affection of a devoted and amiable creature, who, though, perhaps, not distinguished for intellectual accomplishment, high blood, and unblemished descent, of which you seem to boast so much, possesses qualities, and, above all, has made sacrifices for me, which ensure my everlasting gratitude. I have likewise, and I gratefully acknowledge it, other children to supply

the place of one I long unjustly regarded as my *only* child, but who has taken care, by her conduct, to prove to me what is the reward of injustice.

“With respect to the settlement of which you speak, and the inquiring about which, though not acknowledged, is evidently the sole reason of your writing at all; — the only thing I can say is, that no such settlement is, so far as I know, in existence. It is for you, or your trustees, to produce it, which, when you or they are able to do, I shall be happy to assist, as far as lies in my power, in getting the money for you; but all I can now say, and I repeat it, is, that I know of no settlement being in existence, and I think the sooner you get such an unfounded notion out of your head, and retrench your expenses accordingly, the better it will be for you and all parties.

“JOHN MARSTON.”

She fell forwards with her head upon the bed, by the side of which she had been kneeling, and so she lay insensible — She never knew for how long.

When she came to herself, she found she had slipped down to the floor, and lay there with the letter fast clenched in her hand.

For some time after she had opened her eyes, she remained in a dreamy, half-conscious state, her eyes wandering over the ceiling with a vague feeling that

something very dreadful had happened, but utterly incapable of recollection what it was.

By faint degrees, however, her faculties and memory returned; she began confusedly, and then more and more clearly, to recollect. The oppression left her brain to gather round her heart; it lay on her breast like lead.

Slowly, at last, she rose from the floor; but it was to fall back again by the bed upon her knees.

And there she prayed.

I will not presume — not dare to repeat the words of that humble, fervent, submissive, *real* prayer — the first, perhaps, she had ever made in her life.

“Out of the depths,” in the extremity of its distress the soul called aloud, uttering its heart-rending cries of helpless misery. And the voice, which from out of the depths doth thus cry, is heard.

There was no rebellion — no repining — no thinking it *hard*.

It was not in vain that she had listened to those tales of heroic submission, to sufferings and horrors indescribable in the cause of, and in obedience to, God.

Here was she summoned to one of those acts of submission which the best have been called upon to offer in the cause of Christ — and what was *she*, imperfect, faulty as she was, to be spared, or to refuse the cup?

She prayed for courage — for herself, for them. For

herself most of all — the cause, though the innocent cause of this, their second ruin.

Then came a great terror over her. That terror of debts it is impossible to pay, which well nigh drives the firmest temper to despair; but now, she remembered passages of that scripture, which, with her husband, she had been lately led to study; and she knew there was One who had promised that as was the day, so should the strength be.

This was the second eventful change of her life.

True love had done much. This trusting appeal to God did far more.

She rose from her knees strengthened and calmed.

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Still that was a day of many, many tears.

Such affecting recollections! such cruel, soul-piercing thoughts!

She could not, without a melting of the heart, and pity for herself, mingled with her pity for others, recall the plans she had laid for the happiness of the man she loved, and those they both loved. The easy, peaceful life, of which the sweets had been already tasted, and the advantages already experienced, in the leisure and freedom from care and laborious provision for the morrow, which had enabled her Armand to devote himself without

scruple to those higher walks of art to which it was the ambition of his life to aspire.

With what delight had she read in that bright, eloquent eye, on his return home from his studio, not only the fine imaginations which had been occupying him there, the grateful, worshipping love with which her devotion was repaid!

Oh! she well knew *that* love would never fail her. But woe to her! No longer his help and his support — the blessed means of bringing comfort and ease of mind among them — but the cause of added expenses — of debts, difficulties, distresses without end!

She had found him at least unembarrassed — if poor. She had plunged him into inextricable perplexities.

Sometimes her terrors at this view of the subject were almost too great to be endured. She ran about the room like one distracted — beating her head against the wall.

Then on her knees she fell again, and cried for help and mercy. Then she rose, calm and strengthened, once more.

So passed the day till his return.

Armand came home about six o'clock, more cheerful even than usual.

He had been working, greatly to his satisfaction, upon a subject which he had feared would prove too ambitious for him; but those inspirations which come, not

from ourselves, but from a something out of ourselves, had been most propitious this day. He had excelled his own most sanguine expectation, and was full of happiness. Happy as none but an artist, under the conviction of a triumph over difficulty, can understand.

He was not usually gay — life had been too hard for that — that dancing of the spirits.

Even his gladness was serious — but this evening he whistled as he opened the little garden-gate, and entered the house, calling joyously for Evelyn.

“Evelyn! Evelyn! where can you have hidden yourself, Evelyn?”

“I am up-stairs,” answered a faint, trembling voice, from the bed-room door.

He was there in three bounds.

“What is the matter, my love? Are you ill?”

But she threw herself upon his breast, and burst into a wild flood of tears.

“What is it, love? — What has happened?” tenderly pressing her to his bosom, as she squeezed herself against it, as if she would have sheltered herself from every evil there.

“What is it, my love? — speak, my darling Evelyn — speak. What *can* have happened? Speak my love! — my sweet one, speak!”

She lifted her head from his breast, looked up once into his eyes, then dropped the head again, and there was a fresh torrent, a very deluge of tears.

"My love! — my love!" he could only repeat and murmur every fondest expression, in tones the most endearing.

But it was a long time before she could stop crying. At last she looked up again, smiled sadly in his face, and said,

"My dearest Armand, you are ruined."

"How! — what! — how so, my darling! Ruined! Well, never mind, if I am. It's not the first time, you know," he said, cheerfully.

He had not, of course, the least idea of what she meant by their being ruined.

"Ah, you think it is some little trouble about my bills — do you not?"

"Why, yes, my sweet one, if I must tell the truth, I do. I began to suspect my little spendthrift was laying out upon that cottage she has made so delightful for our poor mother, rather more than ready-money paid for. Do you know, my own, I had serious thoughts of administering a lecture upon the subject, some day or other..."

"Oh, don't — don't! your way of speaking kills me. Armand — Armand — I thought I was bringing you comfort and independence when I gave myself to you. Do you know you have taken a penniless beggar to your arms?"

"How! — what!"

"I have no fortune — no settlement. There is no

settlement . . . All has been a deception and a fable. I have not a penny of my own in the world."

"No fortune! no settlement! — my own! own! own!" with an indescribable burst of pride and joy — he called it selfish joy — "And do you? — have you? . . . trusted yourself to me?"

"Never — never would I have been a burden to you, Armand, if I had only known . . ."

"Don't say that — *that* is the only unkind thing you ever said to me. Ah! my Evelyn, would you not share poverty with me?"

"My own poverty! — gladly, proudly, willingly; — but yours?"

"Your own and my own — my own and your own. Are we not one — soul, body, thought, heart, everything, my Evelyn?" he said, with a smile of extreme sweetness. "We are the same thing — thank Him who joined — nothing but death can part us!"

She threw her arms again around him; again her head dropped upon his breast. She lay there for a little time in an ecstasy of bliss, which nothing could take away.

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After this first effusion of feeling was over, Evelyn took up her father's letter and gave it her husband to read. She had luckily preserved a copy of her own.

To her surprise, Armand seemed more anxious to see

her letter than Mr. Marston's. He did, in fact, care very much that she should go up justified in what she had said. He was always afraid of her being run away with by the impetuosity of her temper.

He read her letter and returned it to her, saying —
“My love, this is really a charming letter; now, give me the other.”

He read this twice over, then folded it, and returned it in silence.

The first words he uttered were —
“Can you make up your mind to share a dry crust with your husband, Evelyn?”

“Ah!...”
And once more one of those bright lambent smiles played over her countenance, which were so inexpressibly beautiful.

“Can I?...
“Oh, you naughty Armand, you know whether you need ask that.”

“And can you love me, and will you love me so well, that you can find joy enough in my joy, to furnish a life with happiness?... for there will be little other for us, my dear.”

“I want nothing — I wish for nothing — I care for nothing; I never did, for anything but you!” again bursting into tears, then checking them, and smiling.
“If you won't care — and you don't care, and I know

you don't — I care for nothing on earth whilst I have you."

These were not the mere words of the moment. Neither then, nor ever after it, did she cast one regretful thought upon herself. She wished, hoped, feared, agonized only with reference to him; and such devotion is indeed a talisman that sheds light and balm upon every hour of darkness or of anguish.

Composed, and even happy, they went down-stairs together, and she sat down to make her husband's tea.

After that was over, they began quietly to talk over what was to be done. He had no reserves now: they were at last upon an equality; and, selfish as he called himself for the feeling, he could not help rejoicing in and enjoying it.

"Let us begin," he said, "by making a list of all we owe — it is not much, I believe; but these things mount up, and we shall be more comfortable when we have settled how to pay them."

Then the colour flew into Evelyn's face.

CHAPTER XI.

"The devotion of the passion when it kneels

At its shrine, and all the marvels of a woman's truth reveals."

JOHN EDMUND READE.

"WELL, my child," said Armand, "what now? Don't look so very much ashamed, my darling, of the last act of generous imprudence you will, perhaps, ever in life be able to perform. We shall manage to pay your little bills, be they what they may; and the mistake you were under, has been the cause of so much pleasure to my father and mother; — that I may be a fool, but I can't regret it."

Thus cheered and heart-warmed, she rose from her seat and went to a little scrutoire chest of walnut-tree wood, which she called her own, to look out these terrible papers.

In the hurry of her spirits she opened the wrong drawer, and there was a scream of joy.

In her ecstasy she shut the drawer, ran to her husband, sank down beside his knee, and kissed it.

"Oh, thanks! thanks! thanks! I never once thought of it. It's there! — it's there!"

"What's there?" — he thought it was the settlement, for he had understood the history of the missing settlement confusedly.

"Not the settlement!" she cried, divining his thoughts, "but something — something I had forgot! That will do — more than do! — Oh, I *am* so grateful!"

"Well, my own, what then?"

She hurried back to the little desk, and dragged out a drawer. It was filled with trinkets.

"I had forgotten them quite — quite — quite forgotten them. Esther must have put them there when she unpacked — oh, I am so grateful — so deeply, deeply grateful!"

He was grateful too; for in spite of his affectionate assurances, with a view to spare her pain, he could not help feeling appalled at the prospect before them. Privation, even penury was little, but debt, and no means of paying it, was awful.

"All these pretty things," he said, playfully, "hidden so long!"

"I was ashamed to wear them in your family," she said. "I felt like that Roman lady — I forget her name — I had better jewels; I thought so little about them lately, that I had ended with quite forgetting them. I never imagined of what value they would become to me."

"And must all your pretty things go?" said he, looking wistfully and lovingly at her.

"Go!" she cried — "to be sure they must; and a great many other pretty things besides. Why, you

don't think I *really* care for anything of that sort Armand? You can't really think so?"

"My love, what we have been accustomed all our lives to possess, becomes necessary to us. Things are almost indispensable to my lovely Evelyn, which those who have never had, never want. I only grieve over the thousand, thousand sacrifices, great and small, of which this is but an earnest. You will have to pay dear for your unworthy choice, my Evelyn."

"Pooh! pooh! — I don't care one single farthing for all such nonsense! No, Armand," she said, more seriously, "I have learned among you to look at things differently, and I hope to show you I have been the better for the lesson."

And so, comforted by this mutual love, and supported by that strength which "moves mountains," they went to rest that night. Tired and exhausted, however, they both were, after the great shock they had received, and Evelyn had a splitting head-ache — for neither love nor faith will prevent splitting head-aches being the consequence of terrible blows, agonies of distress, and showers upon showers of tears.

But she sighed, and sobbed like a child recovering from a storm of grief, to renewed peace and sunshine, rather than like a woman accustomed to suffer. She had not yet learned, as all sooner or later do, that the stories of actual life close, not like those of books, with a permanently peaceful end — no, not until the last

curtain is drawn, and the last breath breathed, and "the spirit hath returned to God who gave it."

Like an over-excited child, she was soon slumbering; — but Armand could not sleep.

Since the fatal discovery, his thoughts had been so occupied with her, that he had found no time calmly to reflect upon his situation. His love and admiration for her only increased with every fresh outburst of her spontaneous nature. He loved her entirely and altogether. Even her very faults were dearer in his eyes than the best qualities of other people. But the new and brighter light in which her character had appeared this evening, tried by that unerring touch-stone — adverse fortune, had made him feel as if until that moment even *he* had not appreciated her as she deserved. And that was true enough — she had not even known or understood herself.

"Who can know what is in man, till what himself he is be proved?"

"Now I *know* that thou lovest me."

When the immense, the mysterious, the inexplicable sacrifice demanded had been offered, in faith — rational, logical, right-reasoned faith — that the God the patriarch served must know best, and that which he commanded must be right!

So, to compare human life with human life, existence in its small, individual scenes, with the great lessons hung up for the contemplation of the universe — so it

comes to pass in every-day history. It is not until we have been tried that we can tell what is, or what is not, in us. It is not till we have proved our coat of mail, that we know its welding and temper. It is not till we put off our armour, that we are entitled to rejoice in the having put it on.

The manner in which Evelyn rose to this fierce encounter with unexpected and overwhelming evil, was worthy of a nature — fine as it sprang from the originating Hand — but wonderfully ennobled and improved by the influences which had lately borne upon it.

The time, it is true, had been short — but then the power had been great.

Armand gazed upon her, as there she slumbered, with a deep esteem, mingled with his tenderness, such as even he, with all his love, had not yet felt before. She was fast asleep, her eyelids still swollen and red with crying, but tranquillity the most perfect upon her brow — reposing under the shelter of her husband's wing, and really and truly so completely resting upon him, and upon that One on whom that husband rested, as to be quite at peace.

He, as Adam might have done, "leaning half raised, hung over her enamoured;" but as there he lay, resting upon his elbow, his eyes fixed upon that sweet sleeping face of almost childlike peace and security — he, the serious and earnest husband and man — which, young

in years, he most thoroughly was — remained thoughtful and wakeful, finding it, indeed, impossible to sleep. He was endeavouring to reflect calmly upon this most unexpected event, and to realise the consequences it must necessarily entail.

Armand did not feel inclined, as Evelyn had naturally done, to give up the matter at once without further effort. A very little exercise of thought sufficed to convince him, that what Mr. Marston's letter asserted, even so far as it went, if true, which he was inclined to doubt, could not be the whole truth; and that though no settlement might exist now, — even supposing that to be a fact — it did not necessarily follow that no settlement there had ever been.

It was impossible to suppose that Mr. Frere could have written in the terms he had done, if the whole were a delusion upon Evelyn's part, as her father seemed to wish her to understand. The more he reflected, the more he felt persuaded, that foul play there had been somewhere or other, and what he had seen of Mr. Marston — with all due reverence to him as the father of Evelyn be it spoken — did not at all tend to allay his suspicions.

Armand had been already knocked about enough in the world, to know that strange — almost incredible things are done every day, and especially in money matters, by very fair-seeming people; and he had some way arrived at the conviction, that there is really scarce-

ly anything to which a man who has surrendered himself to mammon may not be led.

The disappearance of the settlement seemed scarcely imaginable, without Mr. Marston's connivance — to say the least of it. It was impossible he should be ignorant of its existence. The stupidest idiot that ever was allowed to stand by the side of his betrothed at the altar, must have been aware of such a circumstance — if such circumstance there was. And to suppose that a man wide awake like Mr. Marston, could possess such child-like ignorance, was an idea too preposterous to be entertained, for a moment.

So, as he lay there resting on his elbow, soothed to quiet meditation by the sound of those gentle breathings, — to him as the soft murmurs of the cushat dove — he arrived at two, as it appeared to him, indisputable conclusions: first, that a settlement there was, or had been — and secondly, that Mr. Marston knew all about it.

Now Armand was a very high-hearted, noble-tempered, generous young fellow, and had in him as little of that muckworm spirit which is always grasping after money, as any man in the world; but he was as far as possible from that weak, half-indolent, half-cowardly, half-morbidly-delicate temper, which leads many a one to yield to oppression and manifest injustice, rather than assert their rights with courage, and resist in a just and righteous spirit the invasion of wrong, whether as respects themselves or others. More es-

pecially as respects others, is this brave spirit to be approved; and indeed, none commands more universally the sympathies of the world. Whatever we may think it right to yield for the sake of peace, as regards ourselves, it is manifest we have none to waive or barter away, even from the best motives, the just claims of other people. There she lay, the wife of his bosom, helpless and impoverished; and he was at her side — elected by God to befriend, support, and protect her. And so help him God, that duty to her he would perform.

He was not going to bother himself or perplex his clear insight into right and wrong, by remembering that his own interests were bound up with hers. And *that people might say* — “that it was all very fine talking, but of course he was as glad to get the money for his own sake as for hers.” He did not intend to make any fine talking this way or that. His duty to his wife lay plain before him, and he troubled himself not with minor considerations. It was his duty to protect her, and protect her he would — even though it should be against her own father.

And as this vow, pure and high, and as disinterested — I will pledge myself for it — as ever was registered in heaven, let people think what they will — As this vow was registered in his heart, he stooped down and kissed that lovely crimsoning cheek, flushing under her

affluence of hair like that of a cherub. And his kiss was as that of the sunbeam from heaven.

Other subsidiary resolutions followed upon these more especially important ones. For one, he resolved not to enter upon this part of the subject with his wife. It was possible, so excessively ignorant was she of business, that Mr. Marston's letter might satisfy her. Indeed, at present, it did not seem as if it had entered into her head to doubt the truth of it. That conviction he would not disturb. If his endeavours at obtaining redress should, as he feared after all, prove fruitless, why add to the pain she must be called upon to undergo, the suspicion of her father's unworthiness? If the settlement were recovered, it would be time enough to disclose the secret, if necessary; but even in that case it was quite possible, that some plan or other might be hit upon piously to disguise the truth from the daughter.

To go as early as possible the next morning, lay the matter before his father, and profit by the assistance of that wise and experienced friend's advice, was what he next settled with himself to do; and infinite was the support and comfort he felt in the thought.

A parent who is a real friend, is indeed, an inappreciable treasure in human life. One who loves — not as the rest of the world loves — in *spite* of their personality, self-love, and selfishness — but *with* them all — with their faults as with their qualities — who understand, or ought to understand us well, for we are of the

same flesh and blood, and temperament as themselves; probably of much the same tastes, passions, wants and wishes. A parent is one who has already gone through that life, which men so vainly wish they could live over again with their dear-bought experience; and who more nearly than any one else on earth can do, reflects that experience to us as if it were our own.

Du Chastel was a father in every sense of the word — a father such as fathers should be; but Armand was that which is, perhaps, rarer still — a son such as sons should be.

Oh! but domestic love and harmony, and mutual well-deserved respect, is a precious thing. It is — to use the words of Jeremy Taylor, as applied to a still nobler, more momentous subject, faith — “the fruit of the spirit, and the parent of love. It is obedience, and it is humility, and it is a shield, and it is a breastplate; and a work, and a mystery, and most pleasing to feel. By it we stand, and by it we walk, purified. It gives great patience to suffer, and great confidence to hope, and great strength to do. It is like the precious ointment which flowed down to the skirts of Aaron, and filled the sanctuary with its rich perfume.” *

At last his thoughtful brow began to smooth itself; sleep, peaceful sleep, which not always forsakes the wretched or the anxious, settled upon his eye-lids; the

* Taylor's Golden Grove.

arm that rested against his pillow gently relaxed; and it was not till the sun shot its rays upon his face, and the morning air blew fresh and cheering through his window, and the sailing swallows and their little hanging broods were heard twittering together from under the eaves, that Armand awoke to recollect where he was, and what had happened.

Evelyn was already up when he opened his eyes.

She had found him fast asleep, at a very unusual hour for him, and guessed how it had been; so she had opened the window to let in the air he loved upon his face, and had gently crept about the room, dressing herself so as not to disturb him by the least noise; and that done, had sat down upon a chair by his pillow, and the first thing he opened his eyes upon was her bright, cheerful face, from which every trace of the distress of the preceding evening had disappeared.

Evelyn, too, had been making her reflections, as she lay awake that morning, watching the advancing light. And she, a sound-tempered, honest-hearted girl as she was, had, like her husband, divested herself of all those fine, over-wrought sentiments, which she felt would now only serve to increase the general uneasiness.

Her bitterest pangs had arisen from the contrast which imagination *would* draw; between the brilliant perspective of the future, in which she had taken such delight, — the pride and pleasure with which she had looked upon herself as the harbinger of so many good

gifts to the man she loved; and her present position as the source of so many additional and heavy evils. Embarrassment, the consequence of her own heedless expenditure; a load of debt, in the place of the ease and independence with which she was to have endowed him. She was become a burden where she had hoped to have been a strength and support. A fresh occasion for those innumerable daily difficulties and minor perplexities with which it is so hard for genius to contend; instead of the delighted spring from which so much freedom and prosperity was to arise.

These things passed before her mind in mournful review — but what was to be done? Sit down and indulge all these feelings, amiable and generous in their origin, but most painful and weakening in their effect? ... No — no.

That was not the way she took it at all.

She loved him — faithfully, truly loved him. And now she asked herself how could she best serve him in this misfortune? Why, by diminishing the weight, and the worry, and the irritation of troubles, which she saw but too plainly must inevitably come; by taking care not to add upon her side to them. She knew well that as she suffered through him, so he would suffer through her, and that a cloud upon her face would occasion him more distress than any other vexation or difficulty that could arise. So she resolved, come what might, she would keep up a good heart for his sake.

Following this train of thought she presently fell to reflecting what, after all, this wealth which she had prized for his sake was really worth? and endeavouring to strengthen herself, by looking the matter bravely in the face, to estimate what was the real might of that armed man — poverty; and how he was to be met. And then, as will happen to those who thus dare to look at objects as they are, she felt astonished as much as comforted, by perceiving the innumerable quantity of things once imagined to be absolutely necessary, which as mere superfluities could at once be dispensed with.

Let any who find themselves in embarrassed circumstances, do as this high-spirited girl did — dare the monster; look him sternly in the face; and strip him at once of the vain pretences by which he scares the feeble into — oh! what nameless horrors, and what sins!.....

Let them pause and eye him firmly as you would some furious bully. Measure him from head to foot. Look what his terrors are made of.

Want of the power to command a decent appearance — that is to say, an appearance like the rest of the world.

What is appearance? what is the rest of the world?
Visions.

Want of luxuries to which we have been accustomed; be manful, and cast them away; they perish in the using.

Want of bread?

Why, if it comes to that.....

Most often He who sends the difficulty likewise sends the way to escape, and if He do not.....It is the Lord, let him do what to him seemeth good. Let us veil the face like Cæsar before the inevitable, and die.

Anything, everything, better than slavery to fraud, dishonour, and sin. Those basest harbours of refuge of the weak and the cowardly. Courage! Courage! Accept! — accept everything; all the variety of terrors expressed by that fearful word ruin! As the martyr accepts the stake — rather than be false to righteousness, truth, and God!

To hesitating, fluctuating, feeble natures, these things are very hard. Let us pity them and judge them indulgently; but let us rejoice when we find a cheerful, hopeful, brave, good spirit, like that of this fine girl; and bless and honour her accordingly. Bless her for an example of what people ought to do when the whole fabric of their worldly fortunes falls into dust around them.

It was the first reward of this right way of thinking, and this generous spirit of resolution, to see the delight with which her husband's eye, anxious and dim when it first opened, fastened upon her.

"That is right," he said. "I see how you mean to take it. Thank God for this unspeakable gift! — a spirit like yours."

At breakfast they sat and talked of business; and all fine exaggeration of feeling was put aside. He mourned

no more in spirit for her. She lamented no more in spirit for him.

There is something wonderfully wholesome and strengthening in business — real pen and ink business. Whilst they were making out bills, and calculating resources, she might almost have been called gay.

“I intend to take my father on my way into town this morning, that there may be no delay in consulting him as to what our first step ought to be.”

“Of course one of the very first,” she said, anxious to forestall him, and spare him the pain of having to propose a sacrifice, “will be to give up this house.”

“I am afraid so my love, indeed.”

“Not a doubt about that. We must make a budget as soon as we can, and look out some nook which our present resources can command. It will be hard work, I fancy, till you have sold some grand picture or another, which will set all the world in amaze; and then the river Pactolus, that you were talking about the other night, will begin to flow again.”

“I fear,” said he, shaking his head; “if I have to get our living, I must have done with grand pictures, and take to sign and wall painting again. Eh! Evelyn? Grand pictures are costly things, both as regards time and materials; and if one fails, ruinous things. Dear chick, you must be content to see me return to the saloons again.”

"Ah! that saloon! and those days! Sweet, troubled, naughty, wilful days! Well!" smothering a sigh — "it must be as it must be — poor Armand!...and so sanguine as you were!"

"Never mind; all is best as it is, except our own faults. Who knows whether I ever should have become a grand painter — probably not. I am best with my shepherds and shepherdesses *à la Boucher*, I did those pretty well; but I must be off. I will leave you a task whilst I am out, disagreeable enough, but best done at once — let us have a list of everything we owe in the world, and then a committee of ways and means."

CHAPTER XII.

"Meet is it changes should control
Our being, lest we rust in ease,
We all are changed by still degrees,
All but the basis of the soul."

TENNYSON.

"FATHER, we are ruined a second time. My Evelyn will, I fear, prove a beggar; and we are all of us entangled in difficulties occasioned by expectations most just upon her side, but which, I fear, are based upon nothing."

Mr. Du Chastel listened to Armand's narrative with some little of that feeling which had been the first spontaneous sentiment of his son; a sort of joy that they should henceforward all stand upon an equality. Perfect love casteth out fear; but it is not always powerful enough to overcome the sense of obligation. If there were a failing deep-rooted, not to be eradicated from the subdued and well-disciplined character of Du Chastel, it was pride of this nature. Sweetened as all Evelyn's gifts had been, by the unaffected pleasure she took in bestowing them, Du Chastel could not help at times experiencing that disagreeable sensation which the French express by — "*être dans une fausse position*:" receiving benefits, where it ought, according to the right order of things, to have been his place to bestow them.

Wrong or right, thus he felt; and it had required quite as much love and generosity upon his side to accept Evelyn's kindly exertions, as upon hers to make them.

His first feeling was therefore that of relief. The second was worthier: it was one of unaffected sympathy with the young and ardent heart, which had felt so much happiness in the idea of bringing wealth among them.

To these first rapid reflections succeeded those more business-like, which had suggested themselves to Armand the night before; and the father and son began, with all the attention the subject deserved, to discuss the propriety of submitting to Mr. Marston's fiat; or taking steps to ascertain what was the real state of the case.

Mr. Du Chastel had no more hesitation than his son with regard to the duty of using his best exertions in his wife's favour; but the more they considered the matter, the more difficulty there appeared to be in establishing her claims; and the more desirable, in any event, that the scandal of a trial in a court of justice should be avoided.

The first thing was to ascertain whether a settlement had been made at all. This, a careful consideration of Mr. Frere's letter seemed to leave without a doubt. The next was, if possible, to gain such evidence of the fact, as being laid before Mr. Marston, would induce that gentleman either to give up the settlement, which pro-

bably could be traced into his possession — or at least, to make some equitable arrangement by which his daughter would be provided for, altogether independently of her husband.

“You are aware, Armand, that a step of this nature will never be forgiven by Mr. Marston — I have had once or twice occasion to know the man. It will be painful to his daughter — she is a good girl.”

“I have weighed that in my mind, dear sir. — I think the fear of her father’s anger, even to the extent of a final rupture, ought not to weigh with me against the assertion of her undoubted rights. — It is my duty to protect her in them.”

“The world will put a very different construction upon your proceedings, I am afraid, young man.”

“I suppose so — I shall not think about that. If you approve and support me, I shall want no other man’s approbation. But I would wish to offend Mr. Marston as little as possible. If the rupture of the last tie which binds Evelyn to her father can by possibility be avoided, I will avoid it.”

It was at length decided, after the consideration of many days that Armand should go down into the neighbourhood of Donnington, and endeavour to pick up any information that might be gathered as to the solicitors usually employed by Mr. Marston — and especially the name of the one who stood in that relation to the family at the time of his first marriage; likewise that of the

late Mrs. Marston's father's man of business; and this discovered, should obtain, if possible, the necessary information from them.

Accordingly, Armand left home, telling his wife he was called away upon business, without informing her of its nature.

The result of his inquiries was less satisfactory at first than might have been hoped; though the invariable consequence of searching for evidence of what is really a fact ensued. Vague suspicions and imperfect indications were strengthened by numberless minute circumstances, till they began to assume a substantial form, which received fresh accessions of strength every hour, and frequently from indications that turned up, as it were, in the most unexpected manner.

The solicitor, who was at the head of the firm to which Mrs. Marston's father had confided the management of his affairs, had been dead some years, but the firm still existed; and when Armand entered the office, crowded with bundles of papers, and with tin boxes containing the deeds of the various clients, whose names were painted in large letters upon the outside, he found a middle-aged, shrewd, and very cautious-looking man established before the desk. From this gentleman it was mighty difficult to extract anything.

"Settlement upon the late Mrs. Marston, did you say? Really, sir, I have not the honour of your acquaintance; nor do I find that you are the bearer of any

letter of introduction, which might justify me in replying to the interrogatories of a perfect stranger, in matters of a strictly private family nature."

"I come upon the part of Mr. Marston's daughter."

"And in what capacity, may I take the liberty of asking, sir?"

"That of her husband."

"Bless my soul! I recollect now. I did hear something about it — a marriage! yes — yes — I beg your pardon, sir — yes — yes! I recollect — certainly; there was no settlement in that case, as I understood."

"That, sir," said Armand, rather haughtily, "I consider to be a matter of family arrangement, with which no one else has anything to do. My business is simply to inquire, whether or not a settlement was made at the time of the first marriage of Mr. Marston, and whether that settlement is in existence?"

"Sir, I was not in partnership with Mr. Wyatt at that time — merely head clerk in the office. Mr. Marston, during the life of Mr. Wyatt — not whilst I was a partner — removed his tin box and papers from this office — whether he retained it in his own custody or placed it in that of his confidential advisers, Messrs. Green and Forbes, I cannot take upon myself to say."

"Supposing there had been a settlement, am I to conclude that it would have been drawn up at this office, or at that of the gentlemen you have last mentioned?"

"I can't take upon me to say; might be here — might be there. If there be a settlement, in all probability it is in the possession of Messrs. Green and Forbes."

"If there had been a settlement, am I to understand that it would be found to be with other papers in the tin box you have mentioned?"

"Why, so I should suppose. Yes, no doubt — but really....." and the man of business, who by this time had put recollections together, and remembered the small portion of worldly wealth, and consequent worldly weight, belonging to the young gentleman before him, began to look as if he thought his intrusion was becoming a pretty considerable bore, and did not attempt to suppress a yawn or two. He fidgetted about, and turned over the papers before him negligently, yet as if he were longing to be at them; and Armand, finding it impossible to obtain further satisfaction, took himself away, with the conviction upon his mind, confirmed that a settlement there was, or had been.

His next visit was to the office of Messrs. Green and Forbes, which he reached after a journey of about fifty miles.

Still less satisfaction was to be obtained here.

There was an old, crabbed-looking man, sitting alone in the office at the time Armand entered it; and to all his attempts to gain information, he returned

a barrier of the most determined "*non mi ricordo*" nature.

He could or would recollect nothing.

The only thing left to be done, was to apply lastly to Mr. Frere's solicitors.

Here Armand was received civilly enough; but all he could learn, amounted to this — namely, that Messrs. Skinner and White had some reason to believe, that the late Mr. Frere had been a trustee for a settlement upon occasion of the late Mrs. Marston's marriage; but they were ignorant whether he had ever acted in that capacity or no.

Doubtless, if Mr. Frere said there was a settlement in existence, the fact would prove to be as he stated it. For though indolent and procrastinating in business, Mr. Frere was a man, the correctness of whose assertions was not to be questioned. Probably the settlement might be lying in Mr. Marston's own hands. That being the impression entertained by the late Mr. Frere it would, there was little doubt, prove to be the correct one.

Finally, as Mr. Du Chastel happened to have called upon them, they would just hand over to him a trifling item in the late Mr. Frere's executor's accounts — namely, a slight debt for two hundred pounds, for which they shewed Miss Marston's receipt.

A debt for two hundred pounds!

A trifling item in a rich man's account — striking like cold iron through the heart of the poor one.

This little debt, great to him, was quite unexpected. In fact, Evelyn had thought no more of it, imagining Mr. Frere would repay himself when her money was received. She had forgotten, in the hurry of her spirits, to mention it to Armand with her other obligations.

He coloured slightly — he could not help that; but requested that the account might be regularly forwarded to his house, and upon his return home it should be discharged.

And now nothing remained to be done, but to apply to Mr. Marston himself.

That gentleman had denied the existence of any settlement whatsoever; but Mr. Frere's letter was in his hand, and there could not be a doubt that a settlement had once existed.

What should he do?

Should he abandon all chance of righting Evelyn, under the firm conviction that she had been wronged; or should he run the risk, amounting almost to a certainty, of deeply and irrecoverably offending Mr. Marston, by presuming to put forward her claim.

Armand was not such a novice in the world and its dealings, as not to be fully aware what treatment the weak and defenceless have to expect from injustice in power: nor the various subterfuges with which the evil one provides the man who has determined to do wrong, and yet to silence his conscience.

This was no common question.

Upon the side of her recovered rights, was competency, security, peace, and the happiness which arises from a moderate enjoyment of things, to which, from infancy, we have been accustomed; to say nothing of the exercise of those beneficent powers, which money places in the hands of the wise and good.

He almost shuddered to look upon the alternative.

There was absolutely nothing. Nothing but the precarious returns from a most precarious profession, upon which he could scarcely be said to have as yet even entered.

He was an artist, almost unknown, untaught, unsupported.

Time, and the opportunity for study, which ease with respect to money might have afforded, was now denied to him.

He must work for daily bread. He had found it difficult enough to provide when alone sufficient for this, and the modest assistance he had afforded his mother, till Mr. Marston's commission had supplied not only present abundance, but had opened a prospect of future success.

That prospect was now, however, closed. A powerful patron had been converted into a bitter enemy. He should, in all probability, find positive obstructions thrown in the path, where he had once expected such valuable assistance.

There literally appeared no choice but to endeavour

to obtain justice; and accordingly he proceeded to Donnington Abbey, where he ascertained that Mr. Marston and his family were at that time residing.

It was another weary journey; and sick at heart, and oppressed with that weight which an errand we most particularly dislike and eschew lays upon us, toil-worn, and overcome with fatigue, he was set down from the top of the coach, at the well-known gate of the park.

It was about half an hour after sunset, and the western sky behind the distant lines of woods was all in a glow of crimson and gold, purpling towards the zenith as the night slowly drew on. The magnificent trees around the entrance lodge threw their black shadows upon the grass beneath them; the deer in groups were peacefully lying and ruminating. The white-peaked fronts of the distant abbey were seen surmounting the opposite lawn; the lake sweeping round it, reflecting all the beauteous hues of the sky.

There the swans were sleeping — sailing and sleeping; the peacocks, at the top of the trees, were uttering, every now and then, their cry; the stable clock, behind the abbey, struck the hour, in its deep, bell-like tones, like the voice of the solitude.

All was so full of the past.

So replete with memories but too agitating and too dear, that long history of a few short, short weeks.

He resolved not to give his name, but having made up his mind to the effort, to force, or rather surprise an

interview; so, pulling his hat over his brows, to conceal his features as far as he could from the servant who would come to the door, and might, in all probability, be an old acquaintance, he approached the back of the house, and rang.

The bell vibrated clear and shrill through the silent mansion: it sounded to him almost spectral; but he shook off weak and nervous feelings, and manned himself to the encounter.

A servant, a stranger to him, appeared. This was well.

He inquired for Mr. Marston.

Mr. Marston was sitting at his wine after dinner.

"Had he company?"

"No; there was nobody but missis."

Armand slipped a half-crown into the youth's hand, who seemed but a lubberly sort of personage, and said that he would be glad to be allowed to speak five minutes to Mr. Marston upon business.

"Afraid master wouldn't see him at that time of day. He never did."

Armand had come a great way. The business was pressing — he would not detain Mr. Marston long.

"Come, my lad, get my business done, and there will be another half-crown for you as I come out."

"Better follow me in at once, then. Master can but be angry, and missis go into one of her rages, for taking upon me to open the dining-room door without hasking,"

with a little sniggering laugh. "Missis goes into famous passions when one vexes her; but we none of us doesn't much care. You see it's easier for some folks to turn off old servants than get new ones — at least, such as have been used to live respectable."

Armand made no remark, but followed the servant down the well-known passages which led to one of the dining-room doors.

This the lad threw open, and saying boldly, "Here's a young man as wants to speak to master," closed it behind him, and immediately disappeared.

The rustle of silk as of some one hastily leaving the room by an opposite door, was heard. Mr. Marston was alone.

He was sitting at the bottom of the table facing the window, with the dessert and wine before him, and his napkin lying across his knee, or rather clenched in his hand, as if something had vexed him. His face was flushed, and his brow ruffled. As the opposite door shut, he made a sudden gesture, as if to fling the napkin after the retreating petticoat, but seemed to think better of it; and turning round, asked the intruder, in no very harmonious accents, "what he wanted with him at that time of day?" adding a sort of grumbling imprecation against the rascal who had let him in.

"Take a chair, sir, if you please," turning away again without even having looked at the intruder; "and be

good enough to let me know, as soon as convenient, the nature of the business that brings you here."

Armand did as he was requested, and sat down in silence, hesitating how best to announce himself and begin.

It was plain Mr. Marston did not recognise him. Indeed, he was looking another way — at the door opposite, in fact — and was evidently so ruffled and vexed, that he could, just at that moment, attend to nothing else. At last, turning round again to Armand, who had taken off his hat on entering, he began —

"Well, sir," then starting off with uncontrollable astonishment — "Heart alive! why, it ain't you?"

Armand could hardly conceal a smile.

"Too true, sir — it is I, and I fear as an unforgiven offender as well as a very unwelcome visitor, I stand before you. But I have thought it best," gathering courage at Mr. Marston's unfeigned amazement, "to come to you myself upon the business which brings me here, rather than employ a third person, in matters with which no one but the members of your family have any concern."

"Among which members —" in a drawling, ironical tone, and measuring him from head to foot in the most contemptuous manner — "I have now, as I have been told, the honour to number Armand Du Chastel, Esquire — pooh! pooh! not esquire — R. A. — pooh! pooh! not R. A. — A. S. S. — pooh! pooh! not A. S. S. — son and heir of the broken philanthropical Spital Fields

weaver, who perished in the attempt to set the trade of his country to rights. Even so — I feel gratified in the honour he has done me — a poor tradesman — by stealing away my daughter when admitted into my house to paint my wall.”

“Mr. Marston,” said Armand, “would it not be better, more worthy of yourself, your daughter, and all of us, to avoid recrimination? I came here about business upon which I thought it right to ask some explanation. If we cannot meet as friends, let us, at least, meet as strangers.”

“Business!” rather hastily; “I would be glad to know what business you can possibly pretend to have with me?”

The look and tone did not escape Armand’s quick eye.

“My business will soon be explained,” he said. “It relates to a letter lately received by my wife, and your daughter, which it is my impression must have been written under a mistake.”

“There was but one letter that I know of,” cried Mr. Marston, growing amazingly red, “that I have written, or ever shall write, to her. I have done with her for ever. And that letter,” his face becoming more and more inflamed with anger or something else, “I should have thought would have been a settler. You don’t mean to doubt — you can’t have the impudence to doubt — the fact asserted in that letter, I suppose, sir?”

Half rising from his chair with a fist clenched, and then sitting down again, as if he had thought better of it.

"I conceived it possible that there might be some misunderstanding."

"Misunderstanding! — Nonsense! The letter was plain enough."

"I beg your pardon, but it did not altogether satisfy me."

"You! — Heyday! — You! — And what are you, pray?"

"Her husband and protector."

He was so proud of asserting that claim.

"Very well — mighty well — protect away — nobody will interfere with you. As for me, I've done with her — done with her for ever. She's no child of mine. Ay, ay, protect away. And if it's not impertinent, what do you mean to protect for her?"

"Her rights," said Armand, steadily, "when I have ascertained them."

Mr. Marston looked relieved.

"Mighty well! — And perhaps you will have the extreme obligingness to let me know what those rights are, when you *have* ascertained them. It's rather an interesting subject to an affectionate father like me."

"I believe Mr. Marston knows the nature of those rights as well as I do," said Armand, his suspicions now

more than ever strengthened, and provoked, and offended almost beyond bearing.

"I know of none in existence," added Mr. Marston, after a moment's hesitation.

"Evelyn has had reason to believe from the late Mr. Frere that there is, or was, a settlement, of which that gentleman was trustee."

Mr. Marston turned very pale.

"Frere! Frere! Frere! where's Frere? who's Frere? Frere!" suddenly recovering himself, and the colour returning to his cheek, "what a fool I am. — Frere! why, Frere's dead!"

"Yes; he died, as you well know, before your daughter wrote to you."

"What an idiot!" striking his forehead; "to be sure. What a fool I am! Yes — yes, Frere's dead, sure enough. I don't know what crotchets he might latterly have got into his head. He was a queer fellow at times, was Frere; lived by himself till he did not know the moon from a green cheese. Well, sir," rising from his chair, "if this is all the business you came about, I bid you good evening."

He was leaving the room, but suddenly stopping, and turning towards Armand with a face distorted with a rage amounting almost to malignity —

"Take this with you: —

"I have not cursed her yet. I have not even cursed you. But this understand If ever one syllable

more is breathed upon the subject of this visionary settlement, which I swear to you, by everything most sacred, *does not exist*; I will not only discard her as I do — utterly and for ever — but curse her I will, and curse you too; and she may learn how it goes with those who have a father's curse lying upon them.

..... "Not a word more. Not a syllable more," as Armand strove to speak. "Do as you list — do your worst — brand me — insult me — disgrace me as you please by your assertions and your suspicions. I tell you," grinding his teeth, "the settlement *does not exist*; and if you want it, you may go to h — ll to find it."

And he left the room.

* * * *

It was as he said.

No settlement was to be traced or discovered; there was nothing to be done but to submit.

But the attempt to obtain justice had resulted, as it was certain to do if unsuccessful, in only exciting the most implacable enmity on the part of the father.

A fine text was furnished for the artful and unprincipled woman, who now by violence, and now by wheedling, was fast obtaining absolute dominion over the hard, stern, iron character of Mr. Marston.

Like others of her stamp, suddenly raised from low circumstances to almost unbounded affluence, she was perfectly insatiable in her hunger after money. Nothing

could quench it in her. She had not only herself, but she had children to look out for — Ready plea — when such a plea is wanted to serve the mean and covetous, whose desires are without limit.

The children of the quondam kitchen-maid must be provided for, like the daughters of princes. The larger Mr. Marston's fortune, the more exorbitant were their claims. The portion which properly belonged to Evelyn, having been at all events her mother's fortune, was coveted with a more especial greediness than all the rest, because it was more of an acquisition, less a matter of course.

The offences of an undutiful child were placed in their just light by this votary of principle; but Mr. Marston's anger was so excessive, that it did not require exasperation. It was aggravated by that rage the most cruel of all, which is partly grounded on fear; so that it required no very great exercise of this bad woman's talents in that way, to produce a family breach, which of all the distractions of human society, it seems the most impossible to heal.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Look thro' mine eyes with thine, true wife,
Round my true heart thine arms entwine;
My other dearer life in life,
Look thro' my very soul with thine."

TENNYSON.

ARMAND returned home, mortified and disappointed at the ill-success of his expedition.

All he had obtained from exertions the most repulsive to every feeling of his nature, had been to render the breach between the father and daughter irreparable, and thus cut off every the slenderest hope, that in some form or other an arrangement might have been entered into, and something secured to her.

It was plain now, that she had not a friend to look to in the world but himself.

He came home saddened and dispirited — too entirely dispirited, for he was wearied body and mind; thoroughly jaded and worn out; he had to meet her with evil and painful news; and find her — how?

It was their first separation since their marriage.

How had she borne solitude under these new circumstances? I have said that he had not confided to her the purpose of his journey; he had felt that it was not right to allow her to be a sort of party in the intended struggle with her father. So he had been obliged to

leave her with the full weight of anticipated ruin and deep pecuniary distress upon her — and how would she have been able to stand it?

She was high-spirited, disinterested, and generous; but it is a different thing to be all that, and to submit to the carking cares, the trifling exactions of frugality, the close, calculating system which is demanded every day by penury.

The very nobility of her spirit would render all these sordid occupations more difficult — nay, impossible.

So it has been with many a really generous temper when tried; but he miscalculated the strength of hers.

It was dark when he alighted from the coach. In many a villa and many a cottage, as the horses careered gaily along, the twinkling lights were one by one kindling, and casting the cheerful gleam around, which tells of happy firesides at home.

He stopped the coach, and got down at a branching of the road, a little way from his own house, and flinging his portmanteau over his shoulder, walked rather slowly home.

For the first time since his marriage, he felt unwilling to come home.

He loitered.

Yet, loitering or not, he soon had walked over that portion of the road which remained, and he saw his own garden hedge, and then his own gate, and through the shrubs of his garden that light which had ever been a

cynosure to him — the light gleaming through his pretty dining-room window.

He thought it looked less bright than it used to do.

He undid the gate quietly, entered the house without making any noise, put down his portmanteau, and turning the lock of the parlour door, opened it.

There she sat — before a small table covered over with papers, lighted by one small candle, and that of tallow.

No wonder the light looked dim.

She was dressed in a very plain morning cotton dress, which came up close to her throat; and over her cheek, flushed and discoloured as the complexion is by long and strenuous application to business, her beautiful hair hung in disorder.

The light of the dip candle scarcely illuminated the table; the corners of the room, small as it was, were dark. She did not, however, seem either to perceive or care for this. She had her head bent down, and was busily writing.

But at the slight noise Armand made closing the door, she started, sprang up, uttered a shriek of joy, and rushed into his arms.

He might be travel-worn, wan, sad, and dusty — she, with flushed, discoloured face, and dress and hair all in disorder — but never, in all her loveliness and beauty — never in his first wildness of passion, was such an embrace exchanged between them as this.

The embrace was such as Laodamia would have given to Protesilaus; and almost in the words of Laodamia, Evelyn might have exclaimed —

“You are returned — I have thee — here thou art!” &c.

“You are come back! — you are come back!” she kept repeating, when she could find breath to speak, for she had been sobbing dry sobs — sobs without tears, upon his bosom.

* * * *

When the first effusions were over, she took her husband by the hand, and looked up fondly in his face

“How tired you are, dearest Armand! What can the business have been which I was not to know? Something painful — something worrying! — as if there were not enough to worry you without that, my poor, ill-used, ruined Armand!”

He did not speak — he could not at that moment. He put his arm round her and pressed her to his breast; looking down upon her with a love which it is given to the eye of man alone to express.

But she was one who was not wont to exhaust good, honest feeling in long scenes; she began to prattle as usual.

“See, see! — I have begun. So busy — so busy!” leading him to the table.

"Have you, my own? — You did not indulge in any great superfluity of light, it seems," he said, smiling.

"So Nelly seemed to think when she brought in the candle, very much to her disgust. But I was resolved to have it, and it does perfectly. Dear, dear Armand, we shall find one tallow candle do in everything else! Don't — don't look so" — for his face was working strangely — "you must not — you must not! Ah, my husband! — don't — pity *me*! — I am the happiest woman in the universe, come what will!"

He could hardly stand it. He felt choking. He was forced to sit down.

She said no more at that time, for she saw he was greatly moved, but began to busy herself with clearing away the papers from the table, and laying them in a certain order upon the little console.

"We must have tea," she said; and went out to fetch it herself.

He saw that, during his short absence, a total change in the habits of his partner had been effected; but he was so tired and exhausted that it was a relief to him to say nothing, but to sit quietly by and watch her goings and comings.

She soon appeared with the tea-tray — and do you suppose any *chocolatière* ever painted looked more charmingly than she did, with her pretty figure and light step, as she waited upon her husband?

She, who had never, during the whole course of her life at Donnington, done one single thing for herself!

The tea-things were arranged. She left the heavy urn to be carried in by the cook-maid, and saying, laughingly, "Oh, I had forgot!" returned with the boot-jack. Such things were indispensable in those days.

She was kneeling down with it — for it was usually held by an attendant when to be used.

But —

"No, that you shall not!" he cried, starting up.

"Nay, nay," she said, and laughed again. "As you will — There, Nelly, help your master. But, indeed, I should like to have done it myself."

She made his tea, cut his bread and butter, which she insisted upon doing, and looked so content and cheerful whilst she was thus employed for him — for, in truth, she was very happy — that she might have been to the manner born, and never known anything else.

Where women are happy in their hearts as she was, outer things are nothing to them.

After the little meal was finished, her china cups and saucers cleared away, and the tallow candle duly established in the centre of the table, she drew a low chair by her husband, whom she had persuaded to rest upon the sofa, and with his arm round her neck, and resting her head against his shoulder, looking up into

his eyes, with those deep, bright stars of hers, they talked.

"So my child is not sorry to have her poor fellow back again?" he began, fondly.

"You think so!" with a glance, and such a world of love in it. Then —

"Don't flatter yourself — I have been so excessively busy whilst you have been out. I have not had time even to wish for you. Indeed, Anne Douglas and I were rather glad you were out of the way, truth to tell."

"Anne Douglas!"

"To be sure! Do you think it possible any great crisis could take place in your and my affairs, and Anne Douglas not expect to be called into consultation? I sent for her the moment you were fairly off."

"And she came?"

"Why, Armand, what a question? — as if it were possible the dear woman could do anything but come."

"Well?"

"As soon as I got her safe in, and had put her in that very corner, and given her a bit of cake — you know little Anne loves a bit of cake — it will be the last bit she'll get in my house for one while, unless I make it myself, I've a notion I sat down by her, grave as a judge, and told her all that had happened — everything — more than I had told you even, Master Armand; for I had made a collection of all my bills,

honestly, dear Armand. You, who never have bills, don't know how difficult it is to be honest about one's bills. To put them all — all in. The absurd inclination one has to shuffle with a thing so absolute and positive as bills! It is quite ludicrous. But I made myself be sincere. I have somewhere heard an old vulgar proverb — 'It is difficult for an empty bag to stand upright.' I feel its truth already. But this was my first resolution, poor as I was going to be, to stand resolutely upright — so I vanquished this silly temptation, and gave in all my bills."

"There's my heroine."

"Don't laugh at me — one may be great in small things, you know ..."

A kiss upon the hair was the answer to that; and she chattered on.

"The first thing we did, was to make a list of the debts. Oh, my darling Armand! what a category, as Fierville would say. How can one be so stupidly thoughtless and blind. When all the bills were added together — merciful goodness! — why, Armand, they amounted to four — five times as much as I could have been certain, had you, or any one, asked me their amount, that they would have come to. It made my very heart stand still — but I thought of my necklaces and took comfort. But, Armand, when we are poor — among other luxuries, the first laid down shall be bills."

"My wise and good girl —"

"I added to the sum two hundred pounds, which I borrowed from Mr. Frere — and never thought to tell you of — for he was to deduct it from my money. Now you will have to pay it, Armand."

There was an accent of sadness in saying this.

"I know of it," said the husband. "To have to do this little thing for you, is very dear to me, Evelyn."

I pass over the sweet little caresses of affection exchanged here, and at various pauses of the discourse. A wretched bachelor, such as I am, has been generous enough in describing as much as I have done.

I feel very often, whilst writing the present portion of this, my veracious history, inclined, like the fiend in *Paradise Lost*, to grin a horrible, ghastly smile, at this peep into Eden.

She then proceeded to tell him how Anne Douglas and herself, after making a second inventory of Evelyn's jewels, and the little valuables possessed in the way of plate, had endeavoured to arrive at a rough guess as to what the sale of these things might be expected to realize.

"We made a horrible mistake here," she went on; "I put the trinkets at about one third less than the price I know they had cost my father. He was fond of letting me know the price of a thing when he made me a present, poor man! At this calculation there was enough to pay all we owed, and a little trifle over to begin the world afresh with. So we both went to bed

very happy — and I dreamed I was sitting by you in your painting room, and you were painting the dragon of Wantley, with such dreadful truth of representation, that I thought I was going to be devoured, and screamed like ten maids of More Hall, and awoke.”

Armand shook his head at the trinket calculation, and smiled at the termination of the speech, but wanted to hear more.

“You are too much of a gentleman, I perceive,” she said, slyly, “to inquire after the result of the expectation grounded on the trinkets. Too delicate to ask what they brought, after such a painful and exquisitely painful circumstance, eh! — as the valuation of *my* trinkets for sale! Oh, for shame, Armand! Can you really think me such a fool? As if I cared — all I wanted was money — all I was greedy after was money — greedy as Harpagon, stingy as Elwes. Money! — Money! — Money! — but the nasty, deceptive things — they brought hardly any money.”

He shook his head again, as much as to say, ‘I thought so.’

“If I had been a fine rich lady, wanting to exchange my trinkets for something finer and still more superfluous — oh, they gave me to understand they would have allowed me a good portion of the original price upon them; but when I wanted good, blessed, honest money, in return, — ‘your servant, ma’am — really the fashion was so much in these things — the intrinsic

value so little in comparison of the taste and fancy — modes changed so — they would be happy to make as liberal an offer as possible — but really' — and so — and so — I thought of Aladdin selling his diamonds to the Jew!"

"You did not go yourself about this business — you did not expose yourself —"

"Easy — easy — No, Anne Douglas went for me, and was accompanied by a gentleman, a friend of hers, who had some knowledge of these things. But it would not do. Oh, this same getting of money is a most difficult matter.

'This world is the best that we live in,
To lend or to spend, or to give him;
But to borrow or beg, or get a man's own,
'Tis the very worst world that ever was known.'

And so, to make a long dismal tale short, the utmost we could expect for these baubles would be about sufficient to pay one half of the debts. So what was to be done then? Anne Douglas is an incomparable woman. She is as bold as the lion in the Midsummer's Dream, yet roars like any sucking dove.

"It was a perfect pattern, the gentle way in which the dear little woman set about demolishing all my hopes, defences, delusions, self-flatteries, and telling me in plain English, that there was nothing to be done but to immediately give over spending money, when there was no money to spend... That the servants must be

discharged, this house immediately let — that your father and mother and I must be content to live under one roof, and make one household, and that all my shawls, laces, dresses, and fineries of every saleable description, must go, and I wear filthy dowlas for the rest of my mortal life — The filthy dowlas was the sorest cut of all — but Anne Douglas is without mercy.”

* * * * *

So, in fact, it was.

Everything saleable must go to pay their most urgent debts. As for the furniture of their house, Anne Douglas, after having consulted the best authorities upon the subject, had advised that it should be retained. They had a lease for some time of this pretty villa, at a high rent; and the best chance of disposing of it was to let it furnished. The rent they had every reason to expect they should thus obtain for it would be a sort of little income — something, though trifling, to depend upon, beside the uncertain gains of Armand's pencil.

Though she had not made the slightest allusion to it — nor ever would confess it — the sacrifice most hard for Evelyn — indeed the only one she very much cared about — was that of going to live with Du Chastel's father and mother in one family.

The very force and liveliness of her temper, made the sort of domestic fetters which are almost inevitably the consequence of living in another person's house,

most particularly offensive to her. Even if, as Anne Douglas proposed, she should be considered the mistress of the house, and the regulator of its domestic economy — a part for which Madame Du Chastel's state of health rendered her perfectly unfit — this would not mend the matter much. Evelyn loved and honoured Du Chastel himself, and found that near acquaintance did nothing to diminish the enthusiastic esteem with which his history, as related by his son, had inspired her. He was one indeed well calculated to stand the searching touchstone of familiar intercourse; but she had been disappointed in Madame.

She felt it very disagreeable to find the noble religious martyr of her exalted fancy sinking into a sickly, low-spirited, nervous, rather unreasonable, and rather selfish woman; and it did not mend the matter that Evelyn was always quarrelling with herself because she could not help seeing this, and not liking it much. She would have wished to have been able to worship, as Du Chastel himself set the example of doing, these shattered remains of a great sacrifice for conscience sake.

She almost sickened at the prospect of the daily task of always struggling, and always failing; ever striving to be considerate and amiable, and ever quarrelling with herself; for the fallings-short she too well knew there inevitably must be. What duty can walk

its daily round and feel no pause, and know no void without the impulsion of love?

The love of God will be sufficient where the love of man happens not to be; but ah! had she attained to that perfection yet?

Far from it, said her conscious, honest heart.

But one step she had attained — that of cheerful acquiescence. She had learned of Anne Douglas to look upon life as a calling, and a task; and in a bright and hopeful spirit to do her best. If all could not be done as it ought, much might be done pretty well. And moreover, she found that as soon as she had succeeded in casting all thought of self behind her, and accepting the sacrifice which prudence demanded, she was at once lightened from the irritation of her burden. A brave new heart for labour and endurance seemed to rise within her, and vivify her whole being.

And so there was an end of that. And Evelyn started upon her new career.

The family returned to that dwelling in the row at Islington, which Evelyn next to abhorred. She made a little attempt to find something in the house way less particularly disagreeable to her than this spot; but, as often happens, the matter seemed decided for her; circumstances worked together so, that nothing else could be found equally eligible as regarded price, the quiet and fresh air necessary to Madame, and other circumstances of situation — cheap markets being one — not

to be neglected. The cards of life are thus most often put into our hands. She felt it so at least in this instance; and having done her best in vain to avoid what was disagreeable, submitted without a murmur, and began her life of cheerful activity, by casting about her to make things as comfortable as could be.

The imagination is a most elastic faculty. She, who had been accustomed to all the splendid treasures of the conservatory and hot-houses of Donnington, smiled at herself to see the pleasure she could take in a pot of crimson double daisies, or sweet violets, which Armand would bring home in his hand.

Her tiny bed-room, with the expenditure of a few shillings, she made quite a sweet little place, even in dull and dingy Islington. Cheap muslin and coloured calico were substituted for silks, and fringes, and laces; common white earthen-ware for painted china; rush-bottom cherry chairs for gilded cabrioles; a mite of a dressing-glass there was in place of the elaborate toilette set out with every imaginable rich and elegant superfluity which taste or fancy could devise; a little muslin-covered table, a pincushion, and one or two keepsake trifles from Armand. Upon the chimney-piece, however, there were a few rare bits of old French china, which Anne Douglas had insisted upon putting there; and over it, Du Chastel, the father, with his own hands, had hung the only picture left in his possession, the one

mentioned in the opening of this history, as representing the battle of Jarnac.

This room was her sanctuary, her own abode, her home. It was at the top of the house. They were all so sorry she should have to go up so many steep stairs; but she liked to be out of the way, and convinced them she preferred this upper story.

She found her new task very difficult at first; the great difficulty being the old, the universal one, that of subduing herself. Her temper was high, and various things, small in themselves, offended her taste and irritated her temper beyond measure, far beyond reason, or what the occasion justified, as she was ever ready to confess. But alas! Madame Du Chastel's state of health and spirits was such, as to make constant demands upon the patience, indulgence, and consideration of those around her. And Evelyn, who had hardly known what it was to have a day's serious illness in her life, except upon one memorable occasion, found it almost impossible to make due allowances for her.

But the most difficult times of all were, when she thought Madame tiresome and exacting with her husband. Then Evelyn lost all patience; her colour would rise, and her very finger-ends tingle with the desire to interfere; the very last thing that Du Chastel, ever just, compassionate, and candid to the exactions of infirmity and low spirits, would have desired.

Yet quite aware of what she was feeling, he could

not help loving her still the more for her impetuous quixotism in his behalf; and smiled fondly at the child-like simplicity of the efforts she made to control herself.

Every day she became dearer to him. She was the delight of his life, and the light of his eyes. There was so much warmth and truth about her, that her very faults seemed endearing.

The consciousness of this partiality was very sweet to Evelyn; and when she read in her husband's eyes the pride and satisfaction it afforded him, she felt as if she were the happiest woman in the world, and was nerved and stimulated for fresh exertions.

This encouragement was not more than was wanting to be opposed to the antipathetic feeling she excited in Madame Du Chastel. It must not be called either ill-will or enmity; for the suffering woman was far too sincere a christian to have indulged such feelings. Antipathetic expresses the meaning alone. There was a total absence of sympathy between them. They could not understand, and consequently it was impossible they should do justice to each other. The frankness, vigour, warmth, and freedom of Evelyn's character, was oppressive, almost terrifying, to the helpless, hesitating invalid; her scrupulous conscience, and rigid principles, were all in alarm.

A little of the mother's and the wife's jealousy too, perhaps mingled, though unknown to herself, in these

feelings. It is so difficult for an infirm, sickly creature to resist such ideas, in the presence of beauty, health, joyous spirits, and a power of existing affection almost unequalled.

But Evelyn persevered in the blessed endeavours to do well.

Many were her backslidings, and many her faults; for daily habits, such as her present situation required, in order to fulfil its duties, are not the work of a day.

But one thing she had learned from those who surrounded her; and that was genuine, unaffected piety. The daily piety which comes not by fits and starts, and at appointed periods, but is the ministering life and light of every hour.

It was impossible to live with those she so loved and honoured, and they so deeply imbued with this spirit, without insensibly imbibing it; and like the growth of a tender plant beneath the dews of Heaven, a new state of being had gradually grown and strengthened in her heart.

To vague, careless, inconsistencies of thoughts and habits as regarded this the most seriously-important of all subjects, the only real life of every human being's life, habits of a very different kind gradually succeed.

A serious impression of the grave reality of these things had been followed by its precious fruits. Faithful dependence upon One whose kingdom was in the

heart, and whose power and goodness filling the wide vessel of the universe, surrounded her upon every side; and with it came a most sincere, honest, single-hearted endeavour to love and serve Him as she ought to do.

This it was that made one so hasty, patient; one so impetuous, reflecting; one so high-spirited, gentle; one so unstable, persevering.

I enlarge upon this matter I fear to tediousness in a work of this description; but it is because I have been so much struck with the proof afforded of the vital power of religion by its effect upon the character before us.

But in the description of the influences working so beneficially upon her, we must not forget that sweetest manna, which has been provided by the All-merciful for the nourishment of daily life — the tender, mutual love of wife and husband. A love, which in her case seemed for ever to have reached the utmost possible limit, yet which, expansive as the boundless horizon, seemed always to expand.

The attachment of a man gifted like Armand Du Chastel, is a rich possession to any woman; every day calling forth new treasures from the inexhaustible repositories of a heart and mind like his.

It is not every one who can love largely. "Glasses," as Johnson well said, "are of different dimensions," —

all may be equally filled — but what a difference in their fullness.

Moreover, in this fight of life, thus begun with all its struggles and all its joys, Evelyn found the greatest support and assistance from the womanly, gentle wisdom of Anne Douglas.

For the success with which she combated perverse and evil habits, and above all for her clear insight into things, she was greatly indebted to this sterling friend.

Those deserve a friend, who can discern a friend.

The sort of instinctive inclination which had from the first attracted Evelyn to this valuable, but most unpretending merit, had been strengthened and confirmed by experience. *L'humble violette* — Anne Douglas might well be called. But the strength of her character, and the clearness of her intellect, in fact rendered her a very remarkable person.

The *justesse*, as the French would say, of her mind, was one of its leading and most precious qualities — the result, perhaps, of a union of good qualities — it is rare as it is valuable — but perhaps none exercise so important an influence upon the peace and good conduct of life.

In all her petty trials, difficulties, mistakes and faults, Evelyn found a sure refuge with this temperate and just adviser and judge; and the rapid improvement

of her character, must be greatly attributed to this most fortunate circumstance. The actuating principles came from higher sources, but the useful direction of these powers was in great measure to be attributed to the possession of such a friend.

I remember hearing one thing Anne Douglas said, when Evelyn was complaining of the impossibility of living up to her own idea of duty.

She told her that she lived too much in generals, and forgot the day of small things. She bade her remember what the Divine Master himself had said, "That he who is faithful in that which is least, will be faithful in that which is much." That she who, without a weak microscopic scrupulosity, accustoms herself to gather up the crumbs and fragments of opportunity and time, will alone find that she faithfully discharges her Lord's task.

"Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves; is as true of your duties, as you are beginning to find it of your expenses, dear girl."

But enough of this.

* * * *

It was rather late in the autumn that a new and sweetest tie, if any such could have been wanting, was added to crown the happiness of the young husband and wife.

A little child was born to them.

Little children are born by thousands and thousands every day. This is no great event worth recording, surely.

Yes, little children are born every day, and yet every little child comes like a miracle to every separate hearth — comes with its mission a stranger angel, a mystery, and a wonder, and a bud of blessing!

So to the monarch — so to the poor labourer — so to the gipsy on the heath. I take the monarch upon faith; but I appeal to the experience of any one who has visited the new-born baby in a cottage, or seen a beggar woman playing with her child under a hedge, for the truth of the latter part of the assertion.

The sunshine and brightness, the sort of day-spring which entered that small house at Islington, when the voice of Evelyn's new-born babe was first heard in it, I am not going to describe; nor the intense sweetness of that moment, when the delighted mother placed her infant in her husband's arms.

They were very, very happy, poor young things, so far as home affection went — bliss, the most pure, was poured into their cup of life.

Alas! bitter waves upon the outer side were rising — rising.

CHAPTER XIV.

“‘God wills but ill,’ the doubter said,

‘Lo, time doth evil only bear;

Give me a sign His love to prove,

His vaunted goodness to declare!’”

W. C. BENNETT.

THE winter was a difficult one.

The weather very severe; the cold excessive; provisions and fuel enormously dear.

It was such a winter as that with which this story opened, when the distress among the Spital Fields weavers had been so great. The family of Du Chastel had passed an anxious, struggling, self-denying time then — agonising, for the sufferings of others — they had now to experience what a different thing, after all, want is, when it comes to a man's own hearth.

They were very often hardly pressed to find money to provide for the daily need.

It is unnecessary to say that Armand laboured most indefatigably at his profession — but ah! the vague, uncertain, nature of that profession, when a man has to maintain a family by it. It is like the endeavour to raise a solid edifice upon a shadow — reality upon a dream! To satisfy the most urgent, the most pressing of needs, by a rainbow.

It requires a certain noble magnanimity, in the conception of that word duty, for a man to elevate to their true dignity these miserable necessities of life. A high heart will do it, and will give interest and lustre to every call of right; but it is difficult. And what adds to the difficulty is, the sort of nervous uncertainty, which in employments of the nature I am speaking of, surrounds the result of every man's labour. Those whose fame is established, and their self-confidence as firm as it is well grounded, and these are few, may perhaps be an exception — but I doubt it.

But to a young man in Armand's circumstances, unsupported even by the aids which a regular professional education and standing professional connections secure — the vague nature of his hopes — the impossibility of estimating the result of his efforts by any fixed standard — the doubts — hesitations, that attend every step of anxious progress; the brief flashes of satisfaction alternating with self-distrust; the deep depression of exhausted spirits; the capricious nature of powers that will not be compelled; the hard severity of criticism that looks only for faults; the various discouragements, and the impossibility by any industry, by any toil, thought, or labour, to do better than what is done! — Oh! this is hard, under the most favourable circumstances; but what does the struggle become, when a man is dependent upon this for his bread, upon this fine, fanciful, changeful thing? — for common solid bread — for bread and meat, and coal

and candle, not only for himself, but for those he loves better than his own soul?

Armand was peculiarly circumstanced as we have said, as regarded his profession, and the difficulties of making way, great to all, to him were gigantic.

He had lost the first patron, whom a signal good fortune, which rarely happens twice in a man's life, had thrown in his way.

For the short time whilst he believed himself to be independent, he had neglected all those minor branches of art in which he excelled, and had devoted himself to what was the passionate ambition of his soul, the cultivation of that higher art in which he believed himself calculated to succeed, when once the enormous difficulties with which his defective education had surrounded him, should be overcome. He had time, as he thought, before him; and to this object he devoted himself with all the ardour of his nature.

Several commissions of an inferior description had been offered to him on his return to London, by the various dealers and tradesmen with whom he had been connected; but he had refused them without exception, and had given his quondam employers to understand that henceforward his time would be devoted to higher objects.

He had done this, you may be sure, without the slightest arrogance in thought or manner; yet he was called arrogant, and people were offended. The report of his

good fortune in having married an heiress had got about, and envy was mingled with ill-nature, and every dealer or tradesman, whose commissions he refused, thought they had a right to feel angry.

Unfortunately, these angry people were among the most topping and influential persons of their caste in town, so that his very pre-eminence was against Armand, by increasing the number and importance of those he thus most innocently and unwittingly made his enemies.

He, however, thought little about it — never perceived it, in fact. He was engrossed with his happiness and his art; and it was not till his reverses began, and till after a few months of liberty and independence, he found himself once more compelled to put on the harness; that he perceived how much of that sort of regular but inferior business which he had looked to formerly for his support, had been lost.

These things were, what men of very inferior talent to himself could do almost as well. Not that I mean to say any common artist could easily rival the exquisite variety of lovely fancies displayed upon the walls of Donnington Abbey; but commissions such as that were exceptional things; the ordinary business was for the most part easy enough, and the employers not of a sort to exercise any nice discrimination between the execution of one artist or another.

Therefore, when Armand, with a wife and child, came to have to labour once more with his pencil for

his subsistence, he found, with the increasing call, a very much diminished facility in answering it.

Added to this, he was not of a strong constitution.

The excitement which a man with sensibility so excessive as his had during the last several months gone through, could not but tell on a frame so finely and delicately constructed. During the few months of entire happiness he had enjoyed immediately after his marriage, he had been gaining every day fresh accessions of vigour both of body and mind; but the reverses that had too soon followed, had undone much of this.

I need not tell you, that Armand Du Chastel was a prey to none of those irritating, provoking feelings which attend upon the money disappointments of a covetous man; but he was far-seeing, and imaginative, and his mind, more vividly, perhaps, than that of another, painted both the advantages of easy circumstances and the horrors of penury. His narrow means scarcely merited the name of penury so long as he was single; but now the idea of his embarrassments would make him tremble.

He was necessarily very much alone and his employment one which exhausts the spirits and inclines to melancholy and faint-heartedness, whilst it unfortunately affords plenty of time — I will not say for the indulgence of, for there was no such indulgence here, but for the attacks to be repeated. Then he no longer lodged at his workshop. There was a fatiguing walk to be taken morning and evening; there was no cheerful,

loving wife hard by to step in between the intervals of labour, and brighten up the many hours of anxious exertion. Added to this, there were long fasts, injuriously long. Evelyn, when aware of this evil, had provided a sandwich box, which was completely filled every morning, whoever else was served or not. She had herself visited his lodgings in C—— Street, and deposited half-a-dozen of the best wine she could procure in a little cupboard, with glasses, &c., and had given him positive orders to take some every day — but to what avail?

She was not there to press the little meal upon his failing appetite; she was not there with kind importunity to force the glass of wine upon him.

He did not care for food — he was not in a humour to feel the want of it. At last, to his other anxieties, was added that most horrible of all in his case — the fear that his own health was giving way.

It was not till the second winter was half over, however, that Armand had felt the full force of the anxieties here described. The little money which after everything had been sold had remained, the rent of the house, and the additional advantage of being, in matters of dress, and various other things, amply provided, had prevented much pressure for some time; and while pressure was not urgent, hope was ready to flatter him with the expectation that professional matters would mend before real necessity could arrive.

But this, as I have said, did not prove to be the

case; and as the winter advanced, things began to look very serious.

Now Evelyn had need for all her courage. She found — what most women will find — that when the difficulties and sorrows of life begin, they must not expect to receive support from the being, a mortal like themselves, from whom, in the fond fool's paradise of love, they fancied an almost Godlike power was indwelling — to protect and shield from every danger and sorrow. They will discover, that as they fly to him for comfort, so will he come to them. That this god, this proud, strong, manly being — is a feeble child of clay, with trembling nerves, failing spirits, uncertain views, delusive hopes, and anxious fears; that he has to be soothed, and strengthened, and calmed, by the gentle influences of that other heart, whose strength is in its love. Love of the faithful wife, or young mother, which is bolder than the lion, and deeper than the grave.

She used to walk up and down that causeway in front of the long dull row of houses, with their monotonous little slips of gardens and blanched, leafless trees, carrying her baby in her arms, warmly covered up, and pressed closely to her heart. There was no one else to give it air.

Every servant that could possibly be spared had been discharged, and the young woman who officiated as nurse-maid had rooms to clean and sundry other things to do, so that she had no time for exercise.

There was something soothing in these monotonous walks, with the little breathing being softly slumbering on her bosom, which disposed and gave her opportunity for quiet thought and reflection. Much did her ever-active mind speculate upon the world, the circumstances and relations of mankind, and upon the object of that great lesson which her own experience taught her to believe it was the purpose of this life to teach.

Her own history, brief as it had been, was full of moral incident. The changes in her outward circumstances had been very great, but those in the inner life were far, far greater.

Every hope, view, purpose — every joy and every sorrow, was altogether different.

It is rare, that so complete an alteration in the course of life happens to any one; for few pass so many years as Evelyn had done in the enjoyment of almost unbounded affluence, and few, even among the perpetual alternations of our eventful social system, sink so low as she has done now.

Many of these solitary hours, however, were spent in the mere penny-and-pound calculations of domestic economy. How, at least cost to the general purse, to provide first necessities, and then little comforts and luxuries, for the hard-taxed father and husband, and the suffering, melancholy mother, was a problem difficult to solve. Still, much of reflection was, as I have said, engaged in things of higher import — in meditations

from which the heart gains fresh power, and grows purer and better. Some of these thoughts, and every day more and more, travelled to her father.

The little one nestling at her breast admonished her; and she began to view, in a light she had never done before, her conduct as a daughter. The consciousness of her faults made her feel how bitter it must be to find a harsh and severe judge of our infirmities in our own child; and she recollected, with horror, the arrogance with which she had dared to sit in judgment upon a parent. Not as an indulgent, partial, reverencing judge — such as a child, if presuming to be a judge at all, should be — but as the most severe and unsparing of censors! — and her heart yearned for reconciliation.

Yearned to cast herself at his feet — acknowledge her own violence and want of respect, and implore his blessing, and his forgiveness for all the many, many occasions when she had suffered that ungovernable tongue of hers to overstep the limits of respect and duty.

She wished her father to bless her, and, through her, this child. Armand had contented himself, upon his return home, with explaining that the purpose of his journey had been to ascertain the truth as regarded the settlement, and that its result had been a failure.

He passed as slightly as he could over the interview with Mr. Marston; but the little that was told sufficed to convince Evelyn that much had been kept back, and that reconciliation at present was not to be hoped for.

She had not asked for details; she did not wish to increase the catalogue, already too long, of matters in which she could not think Mr. Marston kind or right; so she contented herself with waiting for the present; but every day added to the softness of her feelings, and her earnest wish for reconciliation.

* * * * *

"How weary and done-for, you do look, my Armand," as Armand, pale and haggard, and more than usually depressed, slowly mounted the narrow stairs, where she, upon the landing-place, was waiting to receive him. "My love, this must not go on. — Armand, you will break down at last; come, let me take off your coat. I declare it has been snowing this April day."

He took off his coat with her assistance, and was going to carry it down stairs again, without speaking.

"No, you shall not do that," taking it from him, running down stairs, hanging it up, and returning, whilst he stood leaning against the banisters, watching her.

"Come into the nursery. There is a fire there, and the baby is asleep; you can warm yourself at your ease, and we can have a little delicious chat together. Betty is washing down stairs — we shall have our sanctum all to ourselves. Come! won't you, Armand?"

He had been turning towards the little drawing-room, to visit his mother — but this invitation was not to be

refused. They went up stairs; he sat down in the low nursing chair, threw his arms round her, and leaned his head upon her breast, with, "Oh! my Evelyn."

She stooped down, and kissed his hair, his forehead, his eyes — that was her way of comforting him; then she sat down upon the edge of the chair beside him, and laid his head against her shoulder; happy — ever happy — so that she was but with him. Her love was that nourishment of unspeakable joy, which makes the heart so strong to bear.

"What new vexation, my Armand? my dear, dear, admirable husband! What new vexation, my love? will this never end?"

"I know not," he said languidly; "but if it do not, I think it will make an end of me."

"Oh! don't say so," kissing his forehead again, and still more tenderly; "Armand! don't say so, for my sake. There are some things, you know, I cannot tell how to bear."

"I was wrong," said he, with more firmness; "wrong, my own. It is the way all feeble, desponding tempers indulge themselves in speaking. Not the least the more likely to die upon that account," forcing himself to speak cheerfully. "We never know the weight we can carry, till we have tried."

"Ah! that is like yourself!... *Anything* else, Armand? but don't say *that* again, if you can help it; that is, unless

it is a relief to talk in that way, and then never mind me — out with it.”

“I am very inconsiderate of you, my angel. I shall try you too far.”

“Ah! that is as bad the other way; try *me* too far! as if you would — as if you could. No, my Armand, I defy you to do that — I am of a stout build; it is amazing what strength there is in me — only some things! some things! ... when you talk of breaking down — it is difficult to bear ... most of all, because I partly believe it — and I dare not think of *then* — but what is it to-day? Tell me, won't you?”

“There has been an exhibition opened for such pictures as had been rejected at the Academy. Mine, you know, was one; but it found a place there. In a morning paper of to-day, there appears a critical notice of these poor rejected pictures — it is too cruel.”

“What again!” said she, firing up. “Have they attacked you again?”

“I was a fool to read it,” he said; “such criticisms can do one no possible good; they absolutely teach nothing. The excellence they require does not come of teaching; their insolence — the bitter, sarcastic tone of their strictures — the ridicule thrown upon that which has been so dear to one man's imagination at least, is cruel, because it must be useless, and may be injurious — *is* injurious, by depressing that spirit of enthusiasm and faith, which enables a man to dare to do well.

They ask for power and originality. It requires some courage to dare to be original before spectators such as these..... If they would only be civil — only be kind — and if they deem it their duty to annihilate a man, whose only fault is, that he can do no more than it is given to him — only chastise him as if they did it with pain! not crush him to the very earth, as if he were some vile, disgusting reptile, over whom it was a satisfaction to triumph!"

"Oh! never mind them! never mind them, Armand! what you do — you do. If you do well, they cannot deprive you of your reward of honest fame. Sooner or later, it is sure to come."

"Ay," shaking his head, "so they say — Perhaps so it is... But if one does only moderately well, as I know I do — what then? and in the mean time, where is one to find bread?"

"Moderately well! — Yes, if moderately well it must be. But never fear, my love — He who feeds the ravens, will feed us."

"This wretched criticism has done us a most serious injury, child, this very day. A dealer, who was about to give me a commission for some illustrations he had to provide for a book — has withdrawn his order this morning. I do not know whether the critique really had the effect of making him alter his mind; but, at least, it has furnished the pretext for it."

Evelyn's colour changed.

"Strange world! — strange life!" said she, and mused a little. Was that faith shaken which she had just expressed so fervently in Him who feeds the ravens? Something at the bottom of her heart whispered her, that the trial of faith was as through fire. And other good thoughts which carry the believer unhurt through the most mysterious dispensations, and never visit the unbeliever at all, came to strengthen her. She raised her head and smiled cheerfully.

"Never mind it — never mind even it. We shall get along some way — I have got some sewing to do — and that will pay the baker's bill."

But you will be wearied with this sad and monotonous subject. I thought to have followed in detail the long struggles of this arduous existence, and the gradual advance of Evelyn in that path of the just which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

It lay through deep waters now.

But I found a certain sameness in the task. It would be tedious; and what is tedious in matters of this nature, is worse than ineffectual.

I leave her, therefore, and we shall not find her again until years of sorrow and suffering have passed over her.

CHAPTER XV.

"With blackest moss the flower plots
Were thickly crusted one and all;
The rusted nails fell from the knots
That held the peach to the garden wall."

TENNYSON.

ABOUT three miles from Tyburn turnpike, upon the north-western side of London, there is a certain district, which, at least until very lately, was as completely rural as if it had been situated in one of our remoter counties.

At the time the events recorded in this little history took place, retired lanes, embowered with trees, and bounded by tall hedges of hawthorn, maple, and wild roses, divided fields covered with rich grass, upon which noble cattle might be seen pasturing, or which shut up for hay, would, in the pleasant month of June, present a perfect wilderness of flowers.

With the exception, however, of these few pictures of natural beauty, the scenery had a sameness about it that amounted to insipidity; and it was with a feeling of loneliness and dullness that people used to wander through the winding intricacy of these lanes, amid these never-ending green fields, looking over gates, to gaze at huge hornless cows such as were the fashion then — or

seeking among the numerous plants which cover the high hedge-banks, for sweet violets or wild strawberries.

In a spot, one of the most secluded in this labyrinth of lanes, fields, and hedges, there stood some time ago — and may be it stands there still — a house, or rather building, which always excited my curiosity. There was something in the appearance of it that made you feel assured that some peculiar history must have attached to it — one, in all probability, of sorrow, struggle, and privation, for nothing could be more dreary and dilapidated than was the air of the somewhat singular and dismal-looking place.

The elevation consisted of a sort of irregular round tower, pierced with windows of various shapes and sizes, inserted not only without any attention to symmetry, but, as it would seem, in defiance of every rule of straight or crooked. They leaned any way and all ways, just as if the walls were about every moment to fall down. A small panelled door, such as one usually sees within side ordinary houses, served as the entrance to this ruinous abode. It leaned most ominously on one side, and its colour was a sickly green, in many places streaked and defiled by rain and dirt.

Such was the tower, from one part of which ran, may be, to the distance of between thirty and forty feet, a long narrow building, the upper part of which was pierced by sundry round windows, and so placed as to

be quite out of reach, either from within or from without — and for what purpose thus placed, it seemed difficult to determine.

This portion of the edifice presented just the same forlorn, ruinous appearance as the rest.

About a couple of acres of land appeared to be attached to this little property. These had formerly been laid out in shrubberies, grass plat, and a garden: once probably, well arranged, and looked after — for the shrubs now falling about in the utmost neglect and disorder, were many of them of rare kinds, and the grass-plats, walks, and flower-beds, mostly untrimmed, and overrun with weeds, had originally been laid out with considerable taste. All now, like the rest, was in ruins.

Years, it would seem, had passed, since any hand had been employed in keeping this little pleasure-ground in order. Everything gave evidence of long neglect — and few things are more melancholy than a deserted spot of this nature.

Poverty, sorrow, desolation of heart, seem characterized by it. And in no place that I think I ever saw, was this melancholy impression more vividly received than in the one I am attempting to describe.

The garden hedge-row ran some way by the side of the lane, affording at several places where it was lower than at others, a view into the interior of this melancholy little wilderness.

It then appeared that all had not been utterly left to itself in the neglected place. In various parts small attempts at improvement might be observed — such snatches of cultivation as are seen when the labour employed is quite inadequate to do more than redeem a few spots from the surrounding waste; — and where this attempt when made is usually in a most rough, unfinished way, as was the case here. There being, it was evident, no superfluity of strength to spend upon mere attention to neatness.

Close by the house where a narrow border ran round one side of it, separated from the little weedy gravel-walk by a broken edging of box, the bed had been dug and finished; and a few common flowers still flourished, or rather pined away there. In spring there might here be seen, a few pretty big bunches of crocuses and snowdrops — of polyanthuses and pink and blue hepaticas, scattered up and down without the least regard to arrangement. As the season advanced, straggling unpruned rose-bushes put forth their blossoms — tall white lilies tumbled here and there, and various summer-flowers — such as ancient sweet-williams, big, rough, bachelors'-buttons, fading scarlet lychnis, and Michaelmas daisies, with a few more perishable annuals.

The cultivator of this garden, whoever he or she might be, had also extended his cares to two or three small beds upon the grass-plat, where the same description of flowers were struggling for existence; but for more

than this, it was evident either strength or industry was wanting; everywhere else tall grass and weeds waved high amid rampant herbaceous plants — rose-bushes ran up into rough briars, covered with wretched, imperfect, red and white flowers — guelder roses tossed their branches loaded with their snow-balls, over the path, and laburnums and genistas strewed the ground with their fallen blossoms.

What had once been the kitchen-garden, presented much the same appearance. There, it is true, large square beds, dug and parted by what seemed a more efficient hand, were planted with potatoes, beans, and cabbages; but the remainder was altogether abandoned to weeds. There coarse reedy grass, with docks, and splendid girandoles of thistles, seemed to dispute the possession of the ground. In this place, also, the cultivation of various little portions appeared to have been attempted by the same feeble and unskilled hand, which had left its traces in the flower-garden; where a few rows of green peas, with one or two small beds for lettuces and spinach, were seen growing in a half-blighted, discouraging manner.

It was plain, here as elsewhere, that all but the strictly-necessary had been abandoned to one quite unequal to the task. Poverty — extreme, abject poverty — was to be deciphered in every feature both of house and ground.

People drove down that pleasant rural lane in summer. Finely-dressed ladies, in their chariots and coaches — men, perhaps palled with wealth, sitting upon their beautiful horses, followed by their trim grooms — and many cast an eye of curiosity, and some few of interest and pity, upon the forlorn, deserted place, which, in general, seemed uninhabited, so seldom was living creature to be seen about it; but that was not the case, for three people lived there.

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The room in which these three now were sitting had once been pretty and pleasant. It comprised half of the tower, which, crossed by a small passage, was divided into two apartments, each forming a semicircle; the windows being in the circular part, looking out on one side into what had been the shrubbery and flower, upon the other towards the kitchen, garden.

The room was of an agreeable height and proportion, and there was something pleasing in its shape, singular as it was.

Once, that long wall opposite the windows had been covered with pictures, fresh from the owner's hand. The simple, yet fresh and tasteful furniture, muslin and chintz curtains, so well chosen in colour, and hung with so much artistic elegance, had adorned those cheerful windows, which looked out upon the little shrubbery and garden,

gay with abundance of flowers, and kept with the most exact and charming nicety.

But now, all this was changed.

Against that wall, in place of pictures, there only remained the *marks* of pictures — square stains, which showed where pictures once had hung, empty nails, or the little breaks in the plaster from whence nails had fallen. The curtains still were there, but faded and discoloured; the carpet was worn and threadbare; of the once gay and pretty furniture, of the little objects of taste or *vertù*, which used so agreeably to adorn the apartment, nothing remained — all but what was absolutely necessary, or almost absolutely valueless, here, as elsewhere, was gone.

Where? — alas! — where?

Poverty — abject, grinding poverty — that poverty which takes account of every the most trifling expenditure, and which neither the exactest frugality nor the best-ordered economy can suffice to render otherwise, had triumphed at last.

In this place, after the lapse of some years, we find the family of Du Chastel again.

They had removed to it, shortly after we took leave of them, for various reasons.

This house standing so out of the way, and, in what most people would have thought, so gloomy and untempting a spot, had been built by a certain whimsical

artist for his own occupation, and, therefore, contained that very difficult thing to find, a room properly lighted and adapted to the painter's purposes, and with a modest, inexpensive habitation attached to it.

The proprietor of this place happening to die, and the inheritance to be disputed, it was left untenanted for some time, and during that period had fallen into a state which, though not requiring any very substantial or expensive repairs, was one which, perhaps, rendered it almost still more unacceptable in the eye of a purchaser.

It had acquired that damp, dingy, thoroughly dismal and uncomfortable appearance, common to houses in Chancery; and when at last, after years of litigation, the cause being decided, the property was sold to pay law expenses, it was to be had, as the saying is, for an old song. Armand, who happened at that moment, in the ups and downs of artist life, to be in funds, had thought he could not do better than buy the lease of it — and to it he had removed his family, which then consisted of himself, his father, his wife and two children — Madame Du Chastel having died in the course of the winter before.

For some time after their removal, fortune had seemed to smile upon them.

The fresh country air, the society of his wife, and the great diminution of fatigue and exposure to weather, consequent upon his living under the same roof with

his painting-room, had restored Armand to health. One or two of his pictures had sold well, and increasing success promised to crown efforts so persevering, and the patient struggle with difficulty and despondency — still, it had been impossible to lay by. They remained in that precarious position, so wearying to the spirits, of being dependent upon daily success for daily maintenance.

Under these circumstances, Evelyn had thought it right to make one more appeal to her father. She asked forgiveness for her intemperance of language; and she was not too proud, at the same time, to humble herself for the sake of those she loved so well, and beg for some portion of that fortune of her mother's, which she still believed, but for some legal blunder, would have been her own.

Her imagination, to use Madame de Sevigné's phrase, dared not travel farther than that.

To this gentle appeal she had received a brief and harsh answer. Mr. Marston coldly said, that as she had brewed, so she must drink. He appeared to resent violently the allusion to her mother's fortune; and, in short, his letter was expressed in such terms, that it was evident nothing was to be hoped for from that quarter.

Evelyn comforted herself as well as she could, by the belief that this harshness was the effect of that evil influence daily gaining strength, which a bad and low woman exercised over his mind; and therefore she

endeavoured to drive the subject from hers, and look cheerfully forward to the success which now appeared certain to reward her husband's perseverance and merit.

But prosperity had not lasted long.

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The window was open, for the day was soft and pleasant.

The birds were whistling in the hedge-rows, and busy insects buzzing and humming about; the flowers in the neglected garden spread gaily to the sun, and the drone of far-off London, like the roar of some distant vast Niagara, was heard through the bright, clear air, giving a pleasant notice of human life and action. A spirit of cheerful peacefulness pervaded everything without; but the quiet within, though complete, was neither cheerful nor peaceful. Anxiety and sorrow had found their abode in this once happy, though simple and frugal household. Great efforts at resignation had been made, but the burden was becoming almost too heavy to bear.

Such awful moments present themselves in life — when the pressure becomes rapidly too severe for the mortal strength to support — and what happens then?

Why, then it is a signal that the struggle is coming to a close — that the hard trial will shortly be over, and the man be called away.

Armand Du Chastel had done what he could. Few men could or would have struggled as he had. His nature was noble and generous, as we well know. He was like some high-spirited steed, striving bravely against a weight it is impossible for his physical strength to move, and breaking his heart in the effort.

Poet and artist as he was to the very inmost core, with the fine inheritance of genius, he united the disadvantages inherent to genius. No human being can unite in himself the extreme qualities of contrary natures. A man cannot be at once gifted with that finest and most delicate perception of things — the most brilliant imagination, and the highest creative power, and be happy, be content to live, be able to exist, without the expansive exercise of these powers. He cannot be 'of imagination all compact,' exquisitely sensitive, glowing with purest, noblest aspirations, and be a hard-working, drudging, insensible clod.

The struggle with pecuniary difficulties, the impossibility by any exertions he could make to secure anything like a regular subsistence for his family, added to all those ardent, burning, heart-wearing aspirations after the lofty and the true in art, told but too surely.

The task grew harder and harder; the powers of execution more feeble; the actual toil, the mere manual labour of the brush, became more difficult and oppressive, and the number of hours he could work each day, were every day becoming fewer.

He strove to be resigned, to be reasonable, and, above all, to put his trust where alone he had been accustomed to place it — to be hopeful and cheerful — but it would not be; the state of his nerves, which was rapidly becoming more and more morbid, the agonies he underwent without complaint, were gradually eating away life.

Whence come they, these rare and gifted beings? By what law is their advent into this world controlled? These fair vagrant stars, shot from their spheres, wandering among us, strangers bright and beautiful. Vain speculation!

But that in this world they are in a certain sense literally strangers — that they find the uses and the practices of it harder and more difficult than other men, cannot be denied; and it is not less unjust than it is unfeeling, to deny it. A certain measure of peculiar tenderness and indulgence, such as we allow to the delicate child, is due to them.

But Armand was unfortunately circumstanced. His education and position in early life had kept him apart from his brothers of the pencil; and there are few disadvantages, perhaps, that a man finds more difficult to contend with in life, than the one of not naturally *belonging to his own profession*.

To have adopted a line of life later than is usual with others, and, above all, not to have worked and

fagged at it under some degree of the same compulsion when a boy, is a permanent disadvantage. There was nobody to back him, nobody for him to rest upon: he was a sort of alien among his fellows.

At last he fairly broke down.

A sort of obscure species of palsy — I may call it so in my ignorance of these things, for want of a better name — settled in his right arm — his right arm!

The wheel was broken at the axle.

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The little party are sitting in that desolated room which I have described, from which every superfluous ornament has been one by one abstracted, to furnish such necessities as the scanty salary of Du Chastel the elder, now their sole dependence, was unable to supply.

In an arm-chair, covered with a faded cotton print, Armand, sunk back, is half sitting half lying, dressed in an old worn-out dressing-gown, which had once been a handsome one of silk; one supplied, in early days, by the fond pride of the wife, who loved to have her artist appear creditably in his painting-room. It was now all faded and discoloured, and in some places had been patched by an indefatigable needle, which never would rest whilst anything that by possibility could contribute to use or comfort remained to be done.

The face of the young man retained all its ancient beauty, but that beauty had changed its character — the glorious sunshine of the countenance was gone; in its place were the traces sad, yet most divine, of that long fight of endurance which had been gone through; that refining spiritual process, which seems to end in clearing away every vestige of the clay-built, imperfect, mortal man, restoring him to the original image in which he was created, before the defilement and deformity of sin was known.

His face was perfectly pale, and a dark shade was round those large, melancholy, almost inspired eyes of his; and that mouth, whose sweetness and delicacy of expression was not to be rivalled. Large masses of hair, once so bright and sunlike, reflecting the light as might the dove's or the raven's wing, fell dull and faded by illness round his face; and the thin, wasted, most exquisitely carved, but almost transparent hand, rested upon the head of a little fragile-looking child that stood before him.

But his eyes were not fixed upon the child; they were watching the mother, following the rapid needle, which, her head bent down over her work, she was plying with indefatigable industry. She had not for nearly half an hour once lifted up her face; neither to look through the open window at which she sat, and from which the view at this moment was really charming, nor to meet the sad, loving eye of her husband, nor

to cast a glance at the little child who was standing there leaning against the arm of his great chair, and busily engaged with a book half pictures and half tales, of Jacks of Bean Stalks or Giant Killers, which absorbed her.

Evelyn was sewing for her living.

She had at last descended to that point in the social scale when the woman has not only to guide the house and attend to the minutest frugalities of expenditure, but to be a bringer-in too.

It is a hard pull upon the strength and spirits to have to do both.

But one blessing remained to this destitute family—the health and spirits of Evelyn failed not.

In her love for her husband — strong, pure, honest, heart-warm love, well placed upon an object that was proof on trial to her highest imaginations of him — she possessed a talisman, a cordial, which carries a woman almost through anything.

She possessed an unfailing, inexhaustible spring of happiness sufficient for that refreshment and strength of every day, which is needful to carry a human creature through a battle like this.

Let her only love and trust in God, and she stands upon a rock, which this love of her husband will crown with fresh gushing springs of enjoyment and never-fading flowers. This will suffice to invigorate, and re-

fresh, and keep her healthy, happy, strong, and well, under hardships and toils which otherwise would be enough to kill her.

Evelyn does not, however, as there she sits, look as if it had been all fair sailing for her. She has laboured too hard for that. The heart had kept her up to it, and preserved her spirit and health — but the frame of beauty was gone.

It had not been succeeded, as with her husband, by a moral and spiritual beauty, in refinement and delicacy excelling that which had been taken away; but by something quite as loveable to those who know whence the change proceeded.

Hard work, vigorous, indefatigable exertion, had effaced the delicate outline of the cheek and the sweet flower-like hues of the complexion. She was grown sturdier and rougher-looking. The skin was browned and tanned, by exposure to the sun and air, in her garden, or in her numerous walks in all weathers, on business to town. The extraordinary elegance and loveliness of her figure was gone. She looked stouter. All activity and spirit still; but it was the figure of a handsome labouring woman. Her hands had lost nothing of the ready dexterity which belongs to hands unaccustomed to the finer sorts of employment — but they had rubbed windows, cooked dinners, scoured floors — and they were red and rough, as hands so employed become.

And yet who would not have loved her thus?

A thousand, thousand times, was she dearer to Armand and his almost adoring father, than in all the playful spirit and gaiety of her most bewitching and enchanting hours.

A thousand times dearer was this homely, hard-working, unwearied mother, wife, mantua-maker, and housewife, than Miss Marston, in all the full triumph of her charms and charming ways.

You may see the husband's eye moisten as he looks at her tugging away to draw the strong silk through the doubling upon doubling of linen, paduasoy, and whalebone, which composed a lady's gown-body in those buckram-invested days — of waists the circumference of an orange.

She grows quite red in the face with mere tugging; but she never once looks up. She is working against time. At last, with a flush of joy, bright as in her best days, she utters a great sigh, and a little cry of exultation, and throws down the piece of female armour upon which she has been engaged, and starts up with a gay "Thank heaven, it is done!"

"It has been a tough job, my best, if one may judge by the pulls and tugs at that needle of yours. You look quite tired out, as well you may — come and sit down by me a bit — there, Evy, fetch your mother her own little chair. — My darling, rest yourself here."

"No rest yet — no rest yet — I have *such* a day

before me — just one five minutes can I sit down by you — you tempter! Promise me you will not try to persuade me to stay one instant longer than five minutes, by Shrewsbury clock. When you hear the world of things I have to do — if you have the least atom of reasonableness left in your composition, you will hurry me off — instead of, as usual, tempting me to dawdle.”

“Well, let me have my five minutes,” his countenance brightening with the sort of reflected brightness of hers, “and you can tell me whilst you sit, what you have got before you — and then, when you are gone I can follow you in thought through your progresses — but I hope you are not going to leave the precincts.”

“But I am, though — I am going to walk like a postman, to Mrs. Hobson’s, in Queen’s Street; and do what I will I shall be behind time — and get such grumpy looks and threatenings to take away my employment — and what not ... that if luckily I was not the naughtiest and most hardened sinner in the world, I should be quite daunted by them. What a piece of luck for me, that nobody bethought themselves of breaking my spirit whilst I was young! To be sure, it has led me into ten thousand scrapes, and one,” — with a sudden change of countenance and sigh — “bad enough; but it has stood me in good stead at last.”

“But you don’t mean to say that you are going to walk into London this hot day, and carry a parcel too?

Carry a parcel! — this is new, Evelyn. You must not indeed do that.”

“Parcel! — and why not? — It’s as stiff as a knight’s cuirass to look at — but not altogether so heavy. It weighs nothing at all — only see.”

“But carrying a parcel! — I am foolish — but this, my wife, I hoped might have been spared thee.”

“Dear me! don’t look so annoyed, Armand. They always try to make one understand, that there is something most especially degrading in carrying a parcel through the streets. I once heard of a poor girl who had known better days, dying of a broken heart — not of the poverty or of the work — but of having to carry out parcels. What nonsense! — I have done it hundreds and hundreds of times, and neither you nor dearest Mr. Du Chastel knew anything about it — and shall do it, please heaven, hundreds and thousands of times more. Why, I’m going to be regular mantua-maker in ordinary to that *diabliesse*, Mrs. Hobson, and you’d have me mind carrying parcels! — I can tell you, my dear friend, that when you have stitched, as I have done, for three good hours at an abominable buckram suit — you will be glad enough to have a run in the fresh air, though you should carry a little bundle about as big as a child’s fiddle in your hand.”

He smiled, and sighed, and looked at her in a way, to which she retorted by a little slap on his cheek, and calling him a naughty fellow.

That she might be able to stay with him a short time longer — for she saw that he was very low — she sent her little girl, who she was bringing up to be just as cheery and active as herself, to fetch her best bonnet and best shawl — which the child knew perfectly well where to find.

And then, she put her hand in her husband's and held and pressed his, and stooped down and kissed it, calling him a naughty, bad boy — in tones that were like the wine of life to him.

Certainly that he was yet alive to respond to and reward her cares, might be said, under God, to be entirely owing to herself — to the sweetness and cheerfulness of her temper, which kept her ever gay — and to that love never failing, lavished upon him without measure and without pause or void.

Ever there it was, overflowing from a heart gifted with a never-failing perennial spring of it. She kept chatting on, hoping to cheer him before she set out, and leave him with a little stock of spirits to last till her return.

“You want a programme, don't you? Well, then, first and foremost, I bustle away to Queen's Street, and get that over. Oh, Armand, if you were to see the woman — so fat and so red, and such a pair of eyes, and such a fury when she's vexed — and when isn't she vexed? Woe to those who have to live in her work-room all the day. You discontented thing! what *would*

become of me if I had to do that? But the woman — really I am ashamed of myself for abusing her so — listened in my case to reason; and when she found that I had a sick husband — you never thought your illness would come in so well — to say nothing of two children at home, why, she let me take the work to my own house; more especially as I made this a condition indispensable, and have me she would; for be it known to you, oh, great artist! that in my particular line, I go far to surpass you — in neatness, exactness of shape and stitch, and, above all, keeping silk most delicately bright and shining, Mrs. Du Chastel is unrivalled. Something comes of having once been a fine lady, and properly taught — one can apply the habits to anything. I am very glad I was once Miss Marston."

"Many would think that an additional hardship in a very hard lot."

"Perhaps so — I don't. I like to have had my day. Variety makes life pleasing. Poor things! — poor things! I often think, when I see those mantua-making girls, who never have known, and probably never will know anything better. It's hard to be at it a whole life long."

"‘Melissa, like the bee,’" said he, quoting the old thing, with a smile "‘gathers honey from every flower.’ Where next?"

I fancy you will most of you imagine, without my description, the sort of mixture of sad, yet exquisite

feelings, with which these ways of hers filled him. They made his heart beat, however, in a manner that had a fresh life in it.

"Where next? — Why," and her face clouded a little — "where I always go, if I can, when I am in town — to R—'s bank, to enquire whether there is a letter for me from my father. There never — never is — yet, I feel sure some day or other there will be. He's not a bad-hearted man; but I was so provoking and undutiful. It takes time — it will take time — but it will come some day or other — something tells me it will."

"But don't go to-day. It is useless — it lies out of your beat. You do too much. It is too far for you."

"I have not been able to go near the place for three weeks at least, I have had so little time to spare. Don't object to my going to-day, Armand — I do so wish it. I have a sort of presentiment that I shall hear something."

He smiled again. "Your presentiments must come true at last, as I observe they regularly are maintained till the event justifies them. On this plan, Evelyn, you cannot miss being a prophetess."

"Pooh! pooh! Well, you will not object to my going to-day, because I have set my heart upon it."

"Do as you like, my darling, but spare yourself as much as you can."

"Never fear me — I shall come home as light as a

feather. I am to be paid for my work to-day, four golden guineas — think of that, Master Brook! I don't understand the blythe lightness of the traveller with his empty purse — if I had my pocket full of gold, I should fly before the winds."

So she prattled. These four guineas were the earnings of three weeks' indefatigable labour, and all she had in the world to rely upon, as the last shilling of Du Chastel's last quarter had been that morning spent.

How she had thanked God that very morning, in the warm gratitude of her heart, that this resource had been provided for her.

Little Evy came down with the best bonnet and shawl.

The best bonnet! — Miss Marston's best bonnet!

It was the plainest of straws, with a ribbon just passed over it. The shawl was something more elaborate; it was the last shawl that had been left of her once wondrously ample collection. All the rest had been sold. She kept this, because it was one of the last presents her father had ever made her; and it was necessary to have a shawl.

The bonnet was put on and adjusted before a tiny little glass that lay on the table; the shawl folded with a certain indefinable air, which makes shawl look so different from shawl.

She looked so elegant and charming, when she took up her parcel and prepared to set out, that Armand

sighed, looking wistfully at the helpless arm, which, wrapped in flannels, lay powerless at his side, and then at her, and sighed again.

"Have done," said she, playfully, and sighed too. "Ah, my husband! but it *is* a hard trial;" and then she kissed him, and gave him his book, and told Evy to be sure and take care that he had his tea, if she were not back by five; and set out upon her walk, her mind on housewifely cares intent, planning and calculating, how to get six guineas'-worth of comfort out of her expected four.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Cover the embers,
And put out the light;
Toil comes with the morning,
And rest with the night."

CURFEW. — LONGFELLOW.

ARMAND remained where she had left him, sitting pensively in his invalid chair, his eyes wandering absently over the view of fields, hedges, and hedge-row trees, which the upper window where he sat commanded.

It was a fine midsummer day, but the heat was tempered by a pleasant wind which swept over the meadows of tall grass, with their feathery heads in full flower; among which, purple clover, and bright yellow and blue vetches, all bowing and changing to a silvery sheen before the lightly-sweeping breeze, were mingled.

The trees and hedge-rows were in their full leafy green, upon which the sun was casting his rich yellow golden lights, and heavy shadows. Beneath their shade, in their pasture-lands, fine cattle were lying and peacefully ruminating. For whatever else this desolate mansion might command, it is certain this tranquil champaign view was most lovely.

In the deepest of his melancholy, or the most harassing of his anxieties, there had been a power in it

to soothe and charm him. But beautiful as it was under its present aspect, it could not engage him. He saw it as though he saw it not. His mind was absorbed by the image of that fine creature, in her simple straw hat, and well-worn shawl, starting forward with step so light, and countenance so full of animation, cheerfulness, and goodness, to perform her mother-bird task, and cater for them all. And everything done in such a right spirit too. False shame, false pride, or self-approbation for what she did, was no more to be found in her, than if she had belonged to the happy golden age.

There was something in all this so thoroughly appreciated by him, so perfectly and entirely understood, that Evelyn, at least, reaped the reward that many a generous heart, single-purposed like hers, has missed; — she gained the love and esteem she so thoroughly deserved; and it was like a hymn of joy to her, diffusing a sort of atmosphere of harmony around, which it made the heart fresh and strong only to breathe.

Armand dwelt some time, with a sort of tender sadness, upon the fate of one so full of gracious gifts, thus condemned to the merest drudgery of life; and then, by degrees, as was usual when alone, his thoughts wandered on to the future. The awful, veiled future! And he strove to penetrate that blind darkness, and form some conception at least, of what might be lying before them.

Four guineas! The sum total — except that ruinous and almost unfurnished house, and the half-acre of garden — of everything they possessed in the world.

It is true, it had been like the widow's cruise, this little purse of theirs. Never yet had it been entirely empty. Still, with all his faith in that Providence which feeds the callow ravens, it was impossible to observe life and not to know as a fact — that men, and innocent men, are allowed in this world to fall into fearful straits at times.

He could not recollect the dreadful history of his own people — his father's and his mother's story, without acknowledging this truth. It had, in fact, made a deep impression upon his mind even from a child. Sensitive and imaginative child as he had been, it had taught him to look upon life with a certain terror. God's providence, he had been told, and he believed, was over all; and all would work together for good to those who served Him. Yet the patient trembles at the approach of that beneficent knife, which is to excise in much agony some dreadful disease from his quivering body; and the shadow of this distress which would darken over his future was very terrible. Not for his own sake, for he could only die — to die would be little sacrifice to him, he wanted rest but what was to become of this wife — this wife of his — and her two little ones?

His countenance was much depressed when his father entered the room, just returned from the daily walk to his desk in town.

Du Chastel was now become a very aged man.

Aged far beyond his years. The early hardships he had gone through; those labours in the burning sun, chained to the bench of the galleys at Marseilles, had left ineffaceable traces on his constitution; had silvered his hair, and furrowed his cheek whilst yet young; and the disasters, the anxieties, and the mental sufferings of his middle life; under that sad and sorrowful struggle which ruin entails upon a man so full of generous action, expansive thought and purpose, as he had been, proved, perhaps, a severer call upon his fortitude than the apparently harder labours at the oar.

But he had borne this last trial as he had borne the first — as a deep, earnest, christian man — such as those martyrs to the faith were — bears what God sends.

He had worked at his desk as a clerk, uncomplaining; he, formed to govern states, and who had actually held influential posts in the government of those two interesting societies with which he had been so peculiarly connected.

He bowed his head in absolute and entire submission to the Higher will, and gratefully accepted for himself, and her that he loved, the humble portion thus obtained. But now strength was beginning to fail him.

He felt, by certain symptoms not to be mistaken, that old age was creeping on.

It was a premature old age, if to be measured by years; but what measurement is more really fallacious than clock-time hours and minutes! The length of life can only justly be estimated by what has been experienced — by what has been done, suffered, or enjoyed; and what an existence had his been!

He felt and knew these things well. He knew what none else did; how hard a destiny, accepted with such manly composure, had been his; and how it had told upon those inner springs of being, upon which the movements of this mysterious frame of ours depend.

This day, whether it were the heat of the sun, or the dusty state of the roads, or that his strength was more rapidly beginning to fail, he was more than usually tired when he came in; and Armand was struck with his slow, faltering step, as he ascended the stairs and opening the door, entered the room, wiping the dust and moisture from his pale and wearied brow.

“My dear sir! I fear you are sadly overdone to-day. These walks to town are becoming too much for you, father.”

“The day is hot, and there is something oppressive in the air. We shall have thunder,” he said, as he sat down in a chair beside his son, endeavouring to speak cheerfully, and conceal the excessive fatigue which he felt.

Armand looked anxiously at him.

For the first time it struck him that his father was changed — suddenly aged. That is the way in which men at his years show that they are not well.

The changes that time is imperceptibly, but perseveringly, making in those among whom we live, escape our notice, till, by some accident or other, our attention is suddenly awakened, and we see the progress that has been made in that path which leads all of us one way.

“Father,” said Armand, “I have been thinking too much of myself, and my wife and children. You must not go on in this way — It is too much for you.”

“Rather, perhaps! but there is nothing else to be done at present. You, get well, my boy, and paint us a picture or two, and then we will see about putting the once high-mettled racer — if I may call myself so — off the drudgery of the road.”

“Ah! when? when?” ... looking mournfully at the helpless arm.

“When it so please God,” was the old Hugonot’s calm reply.

“But what are we to do? Do you know, sir, that in spite of all the exertions of that good young housekeeper of ours, this morning we are come to the last shilling?”

Du Chastel looked a little paler than he had done before, but all he said was —

"And then?..."

"Most fortunately, she had finished a commission for this mantua-maker who employs her. She is gone into town, to carry back her work, and receive her money. — Miss Marston, of Donnington Abbey, father!"

"She is a brave, high-spirited, righteous child of God," was the reply. "Christian woman, wife, and mother — and daughter too — to me. He who is above, will never forsake her. Thank Him, my son."

"I am not — I cannot be — as you are, sir. I am the child of another generation. I cannot — I must look forward. If she? ... I sometimes wonder what is to become of her — of us all."

"There is one asylum," said Du Chastel, gravely, "to which the children of the Reform have been accustomed to look as the last resource whatever befalls — one event happens to all. Success and disappointment — wealth and poverty — genius and stupidity — good and bad — all go there. It is a fearful prospect, literally to die of hunger; and seems scarcely possible, in a civilised society like ours, yet such things have been, and may be again — God knows. But when it is over, he takes us to Himself. He will take that brave and godly woman, and her innocent children, and through His infinite mercy you and me, Armand, sinners though we be, to Himself; and of what then shall we be afraid?"

"These are high and lofty themes; — almost too lofty for a spirit depressed, broken, and grovelling like mine!"

"There is no other that so warms and strengthens the heart of man. I strive to rest upon it — to face the last extremity which we may have to face, with the strong thought which armed the martyrs who are gone before us. The worst is best — if it brings us into the presence of God."

"Ah! but that young creature! she is still so young. Those children — those little children....."

It was vain. The husband and father! The cry of nature was too bitter in his heart.

Du Chastel looked at him, and felt for him.

"Then if we must needs seek for some earthly comfort," he said gently, "take this. Her father is a rich man. However implacable, it is impossible he should let her starve. When it literally comes to that, he will do something: you may rest certain of it."

This last suggestion was indeed valuable. It was like the looming of a distant sail in the horizon, when the vessel is on fire.

The horrible racking apprehensions, which were distracting the heart of the young man, as one by one every hope was failing, were soothed by it. He felt the truth of what his father said — and was much relieved.

Mr. Marston would not leave his daughter and her children utterly to perish for want.

After this, the father and son fell into a more tranquil conversation. Both seemed better for the idea which had presented itself, that if the elder Du Chastel was, as in great probability he would soon be, deprived of the power of earning a subsistence, this very circumstance might be the means of obtaining help for Evelyn and her children.

So there they sat, as they were often wont to do, enjoying the mutual exchange of confidence, and looking over that pleasant landscape of fields, and trees, and hedge-rows, with some cheerfulness; till at last the golden sun began to sink behind the woods, pouring floods of yellow light upon every object.

They then began to recollect that it was getting late, and that Evelyn was not yet come home.

The thought seemed to strike both at the same time; both watches were out at once.

"Half-past seven — I never knew her so late before."

Du Chastel rose, and stretched himself out of the window, which commanded a view of the lane for some distance.

"I do not see any one."

"Good Heavens!" cried Armand, evidently alarmed. "Do you see nothing? She has a straw hat on; is there no one coming?"

"No one — I had better go to meet her."

"Thank you — but after your day's work! No — no — sir, you are too much tired already."

“Are you really going to make a ceremony with me at this time of day — boy of my heart?” said the father, drawing in from the window, looking pleased. He was always happy, when he could do the smallest thing to gratify his son. “I had much better go and meet her, at all events; but pray do not suffer yourself to be anxious. People always come safely home — depend upon it. You said she was going a shopping. Women never know how to make an end of that.”

So he went down, took his hat, and set out down the lane.

About half a mile from the house, the ways divided into two, both leading into London: one to the west end, where Evelyn’s business usually lay; the other towards the city.

Du Chastel did not hesitate which to take — he went down the one leading to the west end.

He walked a long way. Every woman that he saw at a distance in a straw hat, he fancied was the object he was in search of; but in every straw hat he met with a disappointment.

At last he came to where the straggling streets of the suburb began; and finding it was past eight o’clock, felt certain Evelyn must have come home by the other way, and determined to return.

The evenings were long, and it was still twilight when he reached the house, and came up stairs — but no Evelyn.

The anguish of the husband, and the disappointment of the father may be imagined, when Du Chastel opened the parlour door, with —

“I hope she is come home —”

“Have you not met her? have you not found her? My God! my God! my God!” starting up trembling from his chair, and falling back again, unable to stand. “Oh my God! my God!” with an imploring cry of agony.

It was all he could say.

“I took the west end road — no doubt she is coming by the other. Calm yourself — for her sake — for all our sakes. I will instantly set out again — nothing *can* have happened — nothing *has* happened. Armand, be a man — for the sake of us all — be a man.”

But his terror knew no bounds of reason. In the present state of his nerves, self-control was difficult — but he did not even attempt it. In this dreadful moment of apprehension, he gave way to all the vehement passion of his temper — passionate in its despair.

In vain Du Chastel, alarmed for the consequences, endeavoured to soothe him. The violence of his apprehensions was not to be allayed. Partly, it was his naturally anxious temperament — partly, the morbid state of his nerves — partly, perhaps, from that violence with which a passionate nature, when once the reins are given up with which it is ordinarily restrained, breaks forth — the paroxysm of his distress was dreadful.

All Du Chastel could do was to prepare to set out again in search of her; when, just as he had his hand upon the lock of the door, and was going to leave the room, the wicket below was heard to open and close, and her husband uttered a scream of almost agonized joy, as Evelyn entered the garden.

A few seconds, and she was kneeling at his side.

She looked pale, scared, exhausted; her hair was all in disorder, her eyes red with weeping, her whole frame trembling from head to foot.

"You were not frightened — not very much frightened, I hope," she began — her first thought was ever for him — "I could not help it, indeed. Oh, Armand! — Mr. Du Chastel! — Oh, Armand! — Armand!"

"What is it, my love?" — from both at once — "what is it, dearest Evelyn?"

"Oh, Armand! — Armand!" — bursting into tears, and hiding her face against his knee, as she sobbed like a child — "Armand! — Armand! — my father!"

"Your father!" — stooping down, embracing her with his one arm, and hanging fondly over her — "Your father, my love! — what of him?"

She sobbed so, she could scarcely articulate.

"I've been — I've been to see him..."

"To see him! Well, my darling, I am glad you have. Don't cry, Evelyn. Whatever come of it, it was right if you could — but is he in town?"

She writhed with that sort of impatient anguish of great grief, when those who should console us are wide of the mark.

"Oh, Armand! — Armand! — how have I seen him? — how have I seen him?"

"He is not dead?" said Mr. Du Chastel.

"Oh, no, no, no! — he's not dead!"

"Did he refuse to receive you, then?" asked Armand, quickly.

"Oh, no, no! — I saw him — I saw him! — But how — how — how? — In prison!"

It burst out with a wild cry of passion and grief.

The two men looked at each other in silent astonishment.

"In prison!" at last Armand repeated.

"Yes, yes, yes — in prison — in gaol! — Not for debt — not for debt! Oh, no! — In shame — in shame — in a prison of shame! Oh, my father — my father! if I had never left you, this had never been!"

Armand, wounded to the heart, drew back. It was the first moment through their long, long trials that, far from having expressed it, the most jealous thought would have found it impossible once to suspect that she regretted what she had done.

She felt the gesture, and knew that she had been unkind.

"Forgive me, Armand — forgive me!" she said, her tears streaming down her face. "You know, husband —

you know that you I have loved alone, and beyond all mortal things on earth, and gladly obeyed the blessed command to leave father and mother and cleave to thee; but, Armand — Armand, he has committed a great crime; he is shamed, he is disgraced and he says, never, never should he have done it if I had not left him. It is a horrid thought, Mr. Du Chastel! — Mr. Du Chastel, is it not a horrid thought?"

"A dreadful thought, my dearest angel!" said the father, taking her in his arms. A father himself, he loved her agonies of piety. "But comfort yourself — comfort yourself, dear girl! The actions of matured men spring from causes within themselves. They are the fruits of previous life. What he would have done without you, he would have done with you, my love. In this at least be comforted."

"Do not let Armand be angry at what I said," she whispered.

"Never mind him, if he is. If he loves you not wisely but too well, you must forgive him, my darling!"

This little scene over, and Evelyn somewhat composed, she sat down in the usual place, on a low stool at her husband's knee, and her hand in his, endeavouring, according to her old good custom, to chase away melancholy by her liveliness, she with an attempt — but this time a very forced one at cheerfulness, began her story.

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"I set out, as you know, Armand, in a triumphant sort of humour, proud of carrying my parcel, which you made such a fuss about, and of showing what a much more magnanimous, high-spirited, noble creature I was than you. Mighty joyous at the idea of getting my four guineas — which I was *sure* of — and thinking of how I would lay out two, and bring two safe back — I've only brought one back," she added, looking down, and a tear rising to her eye again; but she brushed it away, and went on.

"It was such a lovely bright day, that if I had been the veriest beggar in the world, instead of the possessor of four guineas, my heart must have been glad in it. So on I walked, feeling brisker and happier every step, and blessing this beautiful, beautiful world, in which one cannot help being happy.

"I soon got to Mrs. Hobson's, and there I was very well received. My handyworks met with the greatest approbation; I was paid my four guineas, and, moreover, an order to spangle and tinfoil four pairs of sleeves for the birth-night was given me. It will be quite a work of art — But how can I talk in this way, after what has happened? I am a brute beast to talk in this way!"

"Well, my darling, go on."

"I got my four guineas, and I went and made my purchases, before I would go to R—'s, to ask whether there was a letter for me. I knew if there was still no

letter, I should be so pained I should be quite unfit for business. It was well I did — it was well I did!”

And with that she fell a crying again, and cried and sobbed for some time.

At last she went on.

“I got to R—’s Bank, and went in through the double door, and up to the counter, and then to old Mr. Thompson, who is so kind to me. He has known me from a child, when he was head-clerk to my father, poor old man! — He has been always so kind about the letters. . . . He was not at his place when I went up. There seemed to be a great sensation in the room. The gentlemen were not sitting at their desks, but standing in knots, talking in under-tones to each other. I stood there waiting, till at last one of the young men saw me, and asked what I wanted. ‘To speak to Mr. Thompson, when he was at leisure,’ I said. ‘Mr. Thompson! — He’s in the other room,’ said one of the gentlemen, turning round. ‘Please, Mr. Phillips, to tell him a lady wants to speak with him.’

“The young man looked as if I was in the way at that moment, and I began to say — ‘Pray don’t trouble yourself; I can come some other time’ — when Mr. Thompson appeared at the door. ‘Here’s a lady,’ says the gentleman. At this he looked towards me. He knew me at once — he knows very well who I am, though nobody else does. ‘Heavens and earth!’ cries the old man, ‘Miss Marston! You here?’ At this, there

was a sudden kind of commotion among them. They one and all turned, with a sort of aghast look, and stared at me.

“‘No, no, no — I beg your pardon; what was I saying?’ cries the old man, perceiving what he had done. ‘Madam, I beg to apologise for my mistake; the name is so in my mouth — a mistake! a mistake!’ upon which the gentlemen turned away and renewed their conversation. It seemed very easy for them to believe that I could not be ... I could not be Miss Marston.

“‘I came to ask whether there were any letters for me, Mr. Thompson, as you were so good as to promise to take care of them.’ He was very white by this time — quite white, and his hands trembling violently.

“‘No letters,’ he said. ‘Would you oblige me by stepping with me into this private room? I have been looking for you the whole of the last week, but did not know where to find you.’

“‘Then you have a letter — thank Heaven for it!’

“‘No, my dear young lady, no letter,’ leading the way into a small back room, and shutting the door after us; ‘but is it possible you can have heard nothing?’

“‘What should I hear, my good Mr. Thompson? — You know I live quite out of the world, and never hear anything.’

“‘But you must have heard something, surely, of your father.’

“‘You know I cannot hear of him except through you.’

“‘Is it possible? — Are you so entirely parted, that such an event can have happened, and you, his daughter, his eldest — properly his only daughter — know nothing of it?’

“‘I began to be frightened then, and in a low voice just got out —

“‘Surely he is not dead!’

“‘No, Miss Marston — I beg pardon — Mrs. Du Chastel. No, no, it’s not that at all — he is not dead.’

“‘What, then, can have happened so very terrible? — For I see by your looks something terrible has happened. Has his wife —’

“‘She is a very wicked, bad woman,’ said he, indignantly, ‘but it’s not her — no, no. You must think, if you please, of something worse than that. Oh! my dear, dear, dear Miss Marston!’ and the old man burst into tears, ‘who would ever have believed it?’”

“Ah, Armand!” and Evelyn, as old Mr. Thompson had done, burst into fresh tears, repeating, “who would have believed it? who would ever have believed it? — I knew,” she went on crying and sobbing, and wiping her eyes, and speaking and crying in turns, “I knew my father had his faults — great faults, perhaps — everybody has faults — but I never thought of this. I thought he was so rich and powerful, that he could

never, even, come into temptation with regard to money."

But the two men here recollected the affair of the settlement.

"I thought his wealth was boundless, inexhaustible; but it's all gone — all of it gone. But if that were all — oh! if that were all! ... but his honour and good name are gone with it — he's a disgraced, dishonoured man: he has done very badly, very wickedly, as well as very foolishly; and poor, poor man, he's in prison!"

And with that she laid her head upon her husband's knee, and wept without restraint.

Presently she raised her head, and with a most piteous expression of face went on with her story.

"When I heard he was in prison, I fell to begging and praying of Mr. Thompson to take me to him. I never thought of whether he might have his wife with him or not. Mr. Thompson looked kindly at me, and said, 'And do you really wish to go to him in prison, Mrs. Du Chastel? — You know he has never consented to see you.' 'He will see me now,' I said, for I felt sure he would. What would be the use of misfortunes if they did not soften hearts and melt them together? I felt that I loved him in all this sin and sorrow, better than ever I had done in my life, and I felt certain he would love and forgive me. So, when Mr. Thompson saw I was determined upon it, he told me that he had an order to visit him in Newgate that very afternoon, and

that he would call at the proper authorities on our way, and get it altered to include me, his daughter. He then confessed that my father had been ailing for some days, and that he believed he had been removed to a room in the gaoler's lodge.

"He then related to me with great indignation of manner, how my poor father had been left utterly destitute and alone by the worthless woman he had married, who, upon the first rumour of his difficulties, and before his situation could have been generally known, had disappeared with all the jewels to a very large amount, and a considerable part of the plate; taking one of her children with her, the elder one having died a few weeks ago of hooping-cough. Whither she was gone nobody knew, or whether alone or in company. She had succeeded in effacing every trace by which she could have been followed; but it was supposed that she was gone to America, and *not* alone.

"My poor, poor father, Armand! Sick and ruined, and disgraced...and deserted by the woman for whom he had sacrificed so much.

"I was most impatient to be gone, but Mr. Thompson had two or three things to do before he could set out, and that consumed time. At last, he sent to call a coach, and we set forward for Newgate. Oh, Armand!

"Such a gloomy, awful-looking place it is, frowning down upon one with its stern, stony walls in which so many miserable wretches lie pining.

"I had often imagined a prison to myself, but never had been in one; and till one does, who can realise the effect of the grating of the huge keys, the letting down huge bars, the opening of the wicket in those hideous gates, all nailed with iron, that admits you into that dark, lofty passage — where all seem so sorrowful — twilight at noonday — so silent all, except the tread of the turnkey, with his huge bunch of iron, jangling and grating. Oh, Armand!

"They told me that my father was very ill — confined to his bed — in the small room where he had originally been placed, for it had not been thought proper to move him. And as he had not been bailed, he was in detention under lock and key, for the charges were very heavy against him. It was not yet known whether the magistrates would admit him to bail — I did not understand much about it... Mr. Thompson interrupted the turnkey by saying, 'This lady is Mr. Marston's daughter;' upon which the man immediately broke off, and said no more. I thought he looked at me kindly and compassionately — not as one fancies turnkeys.

"At the end of this long, dismal passage he stopped and opened a door, into a small, gloomy-looking room, and told us to enter. I made a sign to Mr. Thompson to go in first, and prepare my father to see me, for my heart was so full, I could not speak.

"Mr. Thompson went straight up to the bed, and I stood trembling at the door listening, in hopes to hear my poor father's voice.

"There came a low, hollow sound from the bed, and in broken accents some one asked, 'Who was there?'

"'Thompson, sir;' stooping down to the bed. 'I hope I find you better?'

"'No better,' in a trembling, almost inaudible voice, I could hardly catch the words — 'and I hope I never shall be better.'

"'You must not say that,' answered Mr. Thompson, trying to speak cheerfully; 'don't say that, sir... When things are at the worst, they must mend.'

"There was no answer to this — but a mournful shake of the head.

"'I have brought another friend to see you, sir,' began Mr. Thompson, again placing himself so as to hide me.

"'A friend! — I have no friends!'

"'A friend indeed — a very affectionate friend, sir.'

"'They are all gone away. Have you heard anything from her?'

"'Oh no, sir. Pray don't turn your mind to that subject. The friend I have brought with me, is very different from the other. She came the moment...'

"'She! — what she?'

"'The lady that loves you, and that you love dearly,' said good Mr. Thompson. 'The lady you have not seen

for a long time, but who has flown to you the moment she heard of your distress... Your daughter, sir.'

"And before I knew where I was, or what I was doing, I had flown to the bed-side, and we were locked in each other's arms.

"Oh, Mr. Du Chastel! oh, Armand!

"We cried both of us a long time. He had his arms squeezed round me, and I held him so tight, as if I could never bear to be parted from him again. That is all I remember of it. I cried as if my heart would break, and, poor man, he cried like a child. I never in my whole life saw my father shed a tear before. It was very shocking — yet it was very sweet.

"We were in this way I don't know how long — I can't remember well — the first thing I recollect clearly, was my kneeling by his bedside, supporting his pillow upon my arm, and looking into his eyes.

"Such great, wide, sad, bloodshot, dreary eyes! with the eyelids wrinkled and falling from them as if it were the face of a very old man... and so it looked, indeed, it was all so furrowed, and thin, and care-worn.

"He did not speak for a long while — he kept looking at me with those dreary eyes. It seemed as if he could not satisfy himself with looking. Yet as if it gave him little comfort.

"I stooped down from time to time, and kissed his forehead, and kept saying, 'Dear father — dear father!'

hoping he would speak, but it was a long time before he did.

"At last he said in a tone — it was like a voice from the grave — so broken, and so deep and hollow —

"‘My child, you must forgive your father, for he wronged you grievously.’

"I could only answer by my tears and my caresses.

"‘You will forgive me — I see you *do*... I shall die more easy, dear, good Evelyn.’

"Well, well, you will be tired. Ah, no! I see, dear Mr. Du Chastel, you are not," as she turned, and saw Du Chastel's face fixed upon her with such an expression of melancholy approbation! "How kind you both are to me. And I am sure," to Armand, "you will not think I was wrong to leave a guinea with the turnkey when I went away, to get him some better things, for his ruin is so complete, and that wretched woman has robbed him so utterly of everything — carrying away all the money there was in the house, all, but what was in his pocket — that he is actually in want! Gracious Heavens! to think it possible that *he* should ever know want. I am sure you would think it right to give the guinea, Armand."

"You doubt it, Evelyn? *that* I am sure you don't," was the reply.

She then went on to relate, how, as it grew towards dusk, she first recollected them at home, and began to think she ought to be returning, and how, shortly after,

the turnkey entered, and said it was time to lock up; and so she and her father parted. "But before I went away, I promised him, poor man, that I would come again to-morrow, as Mr. Thompson said he was sure he could procure me an order."

And so ended Evelyn's narrative.

But not so ended the fresh anxieties and difficulties which this most unlooked-for misfortune brought in its train.

The state in which Mr. Marston found himself was really extraordinary. Usually, in such cases, a man has relations, or friends at least, who come forward to rescue him from the immediate consequences of a disaster of this nature; but, strange to say, Mr. Marston was almost destitute of both. Of his relations, Mrs. Fitzroy had married again, and was at present at Rio Janeiro, her elder son having been some time dead; he had been succeeded in his estate by his brother Leonard, a man always of singular habits, living much abstracted from the affairs of ordinary life; but who since his rejection by Miss Marston, had completely given up society, and resided upon a property he possessed in a remote part of Ireland, completely absorbed by those pursuits for which he had such remarkable dispositions and talents.

Nothing had been heard of him since then, except that he led a sort of hermit's life in this remote place, seeing no one, exchanging letters with no one; as completely dead to the world as lost to his relations.

Of Evelyn's marriage with young Du Chastel he had of course heard, and had deeply, bitterly, implacably resented it.

For his very calmness and apparently passive strength of perseverance, a temperament which so admirably adapted him to his peculiar pursuits, seemed to influence him as regarded the passions.

He took everything quietly. There was little outward demonstration of any kind; but he had loved his cousin with an intensity which belongs to the concentration of all feeling upon one single object, like the rays of the sun collected in a burning-glass.

He had been accustomed, in his calm, undemonstrative way, to look upon her as his own; and in this conviction had gone on, absorbed by his abstract occupations, and taking little pains to secure what he regarded as a matter of course.

But strange as this conduct may seem, it did not proceed from coldness or indifference as I have said, his love had all the depth and intensity belonging to his nature.

His disappointment was most bitter — but there was more than this. There was deep resentment added to it. He thought she had used him ill, and to this thought he adhered. It was not in him to examine his feelings, to compare them with the rules of reason and justice. Profound logician as he was, concerning his feelings he never reasoned at all. They were not many, but what

there were, were *there*; that was enough. They were *there*, and they remained there.

So from the time he heard of Evelyn's marriage, he never once mentioned her name.

Nevertheless, something of the distress into which she had fallen, had, by some means of which I am ignorant, reached him. He received the intelligence with a bitter smile, and a gratified feeling of revenge, revenge which he had never sought, but which he not the less enjoyed when it came of itself. He had not activity enough in his hatred to seek for revenge — he had not gone so far as even to wish for it — but when it came, it was, as I said, thoroughly enjoyed, and the last thing that would have entered his head, would have been the idea of holding out the hand, and endeavouring to mitigate sufferings so well deserved, and, least of all, to save her *husband* from misery, however deplorable.

Well then.

Leonard Fitzroy was living at this remote place of his, in Ireland, at the time of Mr. Marston's terrible downfall. Whether he had heard of it or not, was unknown. He was the last man Mr. Marston would have thought of applying to, — for his indignation at his uncle's unworthy marriage had been extreme. He had expressed himself but once, as was his way, upon the subject; but it was in terms which could not be

forgiven; and all intercourse between the uncle and nephew had from that time ceased.

As for friends — such men as Mr. Marston may have cronies, but have rarely friends. And when the hour of his disgraceful ruin arrived — if it had not been for his old once confidential clerk, Mr. Thompson, he would have been literally deserted.

So he fell like a dead weight upon this grievously overburdened household of the Du Chastels.

There was but one feeling among them. Had he stood in an equally sacred relation to them all, there could not have been more readiness to sacrifice everything yet left, and to brave new dangers, to supply the wants of this poor sinful man — now stretched upon his bed of remorse and pain — a prey to the sufferings of a tortured body, and a distracted mind.

To help him, they did that, which never in all the course of their long struggles they had yet done — they contracted debts.

Then time — precious time! — Evelyn's literally golden moments, were added to the gift of money! — Yet they gave it.

She passed the greater part of the day, and often of the night, by her father's bed-side in that close, unwholesome little room from which it was as yet impossible to move him; and in addition to all their other distresses, the evident decline of Evelyn's health and strength excited apprehensions which may literally be

called racking, in the mind of her husband and his father.

It seemed as if their doom was sealed, and that they were all to perish together.

The ways of Providence are inscrutable.

Creatures such as these actually perishing of accumulated distress! And that hard, rich man, in Ireland, rolling in wealth unused — except to be lavished upon the most extravagant scientific experiments and conceptions — remaining wholly insensible to the accounts which imperfectly reached him of the state of things, and not even taking the trouble to inquire further. He left father and daughter to a fate they had both, in his opinion, richly merited.

* * * *

It was one cloudless night, Leonard Fitzroy had been engaged watching a transit of Venus, through the large telescope, almost rivalling that of Herschel, which at an immense expense — as was unavoidable in those days — he had erected.

The telescope stood in his park, at some little distance from the house; and after he had finished his observation, and the transit was passed, he walked home alone through the woods and over the fine expanse of lawn which lay between them and the house.

Whether he was over-fatigued with the intense interest of his late occupation, upon certain results of which, some consequences, as he believed, most impor-

tant to science, were depending — or from one of those unaccountable changes of the spirits to which the most impassible of philosophers is at times liable; he fell into a fit — mood rare, indeed, for him — of melancholy.

That white, beautiful planet, so calmly shining in front of him, reminded him of times gone by — and of that animated, beautiful girl — alas! still too dear — with whom, in her young days, he used to walk out at Donnington upon fine evenings, when the heavens were glittering in all their glory, and teach her the names of those wondrous urns of light, and to distinguish planet and fixed star — and the dazzling Orion from the glittering Bear. Above all, he remembered one night in particular, when Venus was shining before them just as she was shining now; and he, with rather more pedantry than originality in his gallantry, had said it should be her star — and she had laughed at him.

The scene returned so vividly to his memory. That gay, bright girl — so saucy! — so quick! — so ready! — yet so affectionate and friendly to him. And suddenly a pang — sharp as if some assassin had struck a dagger through his heart — awakened him as from a long dream, and he wondered how he could have borne so to neglect her.

Mr. Marston, too, criminal as he was — had been kind to him. If he had given himself up to sin and folly, the injury was not to him; *he* was not called upon to resent it.

Leonard was as slow to move as some immense dead weight; but once set in motion, he moved something with the same sort of irresistible impetus.

The first thing he did when he got into the house, was to order his carriage to be ready at four o'clock on the following morning to take him the first stage on the road to England.

* * * * *

Evelyn was sitting by the side of her father's bed — her arm was under his pillow, supporting his head, and in this attitude, after much restlessness and suffering, he had at last fallen asleep. He lay there, his thin worn face of suffering resting against the pillow — his hair, which had suddenly become quite grey, falling round it — a sorrowful picture.

She was looking on him with a kind, sad, pitying expression. Her own heavy anxieties and most painful embarrassments scarcely thought of, in compassion for that poor sinner. Now deeply penitent — but alas! how late!

He had confessed to her the wrong he had done in the matter of the settlement — and had humbly entreated the forgiveness of them all. The manner of doing this had affected her very much. She entirely forgot the injury in tenderness for the injurer. Thus meekly repented of, she thought she loved him almost the better for it.

But it was a sore misfortune. In thus depriving his daughter of all resource, he had sealed his own fate

with hers, and he had now to share the penury he had occasioned.

Not that everything possible — even more, if that were possible — was not done for him. The sacrifices made to his daily comfort in their most distressing situation were heroic — were angelic. But how long this could last, it was impossible to say. Every day seemed to open with a threat that their means would utterly fail them, yet every day seemed to bring with it some little assistance or other, which prevented their utterly sinking. The widow's cruse has typified the experience of many a one.

This particular day had been a very bad one in all ways. There had been more than usual difficulty in providing the supplies. The little purse was almost empty, and her father had been worse than ever.

She had been with him many hours, and had obtained leave, if necessary, to sit up with him that night.

* * * *

She was sitting, as I said, by the bed-side, supporting him with her aching arm — afraid to move lest she should break his light slumber, and interrupt a short relief from suffering.

She looked sadly changed.

All that had been left of her beauty, and vigorous, animated look and action, was gone. She was thoroughly worn out. She had become prematurely old. Her hair was not actually grizzled, but it was dry, dull, and

colourless. Her cheek was pale, yellow, and sunken; her eyes hollow and dim; and the unmistakeable wrinkles were gathering round her temples.

She looked ill — and she felt ill. Her shattered nerves would tremble and beat at the least exertion; her limbs seemed failing under her. She never complained. Why complain, and add to the general misery? She felt — and there was a sort of comfort in that — that they were all going together.

The evening of this long, and much suffering day was drawing on, and still she sat there immoveable, supporting that poor sinner's face against her arm, when she heard the door of the cell softly open.

She thinking it the kind turnkey, who was as gentle in his attendances upon her as the tenderest woman could have been — for the rough fellow's heart was perfectly won by her — turned to sign to him not to approach the bed; and then recovering her former position, continued to watch her patient, without giving the new comer any further attention.

It was not, however, the turnkey.

It was the man who had come with headlong haste from Ireland, to repair his long neglects, and barbarous indifference to suffering.

He was excessively shocked and affected by the scene presented to him.

It was now nearly dark, and the one candle gleamed with a sickly sort of light upon the pale, haggard face

of the sleeper upon the pillow, and the still beautiful, but faded, form of his daughter.

It told a long tale of suffering; — suffering which had transformed days into years, and rendered her already almost old.

Yet there she sat, tenderly ministering to that bad father, who had used her so cruelly, and acted so foolishly, and so ill.

Leonard had despised, as much as he hated him for his conduct, and thought no punishment greater than his deserts, so he was not much moved by the sight of him.

But his daughter was by his side, evidently giving her last strength — and as he had found reason to fear, since he had entered the prison, her last shilling — to help and comfort him.

And he himself had been so cruel and unrelenting, that far from relieving as he might have done, by the expenditure of a little of that wealth which was superfluous to him — far from doing what would have been only the ordinary duty of so near a kinsman, he had actually taken a secret pleasure in the idea of their distresses. Of the extremity at which they had arrived, it is true, he had formed a most imperfect notion — as who does not, of sufferings at a distance? — but he now reproached himself bitterly with having neglected to inquire as to how the case really stood.

But thank Heaven! — A mere form of speech with

him. This philosopher of ours believed not in the existence of anything to thank.

Thank Heaven, however, it was not too late. His heart began to beat with a sort of warm, wholesome gladness he had rarely felt before at the idea of the power which, like some great magician, he possessed, by the golden talisman of his wealth, to transform all this misery into happiness, and to fill every suffering heart among them with gratitude and joy.

It was a delightful moment of not unworthy triumph, for he included Armand in his projects of beneficence; and that thought, at least, had virtue in it.

As Evelyn did not move, he, at last, grew impatient.

He was as inexperienced as a child in the performance of acts of benevolence; he felt impatient as a child to begin.

He crept up to the side of the bed, laid his hand on Evelyn's shoulder, and said, in a low voice,

"Don't start; don't be frightened. It is I. Your cousin Leonard."

She was startled — but not very much. The power of being greatly excited by any event was fast leaving her.

"Leonard!" she said, and turned upon him her mournful, and, as he thought, somewhat reproachful eyes.

"I am come at last," he went on. "And I am very sorry, Evelyn, I have not come sooner; but, happily, it is not too late."

She shook her head gently.

"No — no, it is not too late; it shall not be too

late.... I am come, and everything that money can do for you all is henceforth at your command. You must be certain of that, Evelyn."

"I always thought you were generous as regarded money," she said, rather coldly. "You are very kind to think of us, I am sure." And her pride giving way when she thought of the distress at home; and her simple, honest nature, accepting help gratefully, though coming in the very last form that she could have wished it; "and I am sure a little help from a friend till things are somewhat better with us, will be a great mercy. For it is going hard with us all."

"It shall do so no more. Forgive me, Evelyn, for my long silence... I had not — believe me, I had not — the slightest idea of how things really stood, or I would have been here earlier. I would have been with you immediately... But all troubles are over now. Everything I have in the world is at your disposal."

It was a relief — a very great relief, after all she had endured, and all she feared.

She was beginning to feel that she could not bear up much longer. To receive help from Leonard after his long unkindness, was painful; and he had a sort of awkward way of conferring favours, partly proceeding from his faults, and partly from his better qualities, which in more fastidious days would have made her reject his benefits at once; but she was sunk below these delicate feelings now.

She was like one perishing in the last extremity of hunger. She would accept any sort of bread.

He drew a chair and sat down by her, and in whispers began a conversation, as if they had parted but a few days before. For he was simplicity and straightforwardness itself; and now he was awakened to a better sense of what it was incumbent upon him to do, he set about it in right earnest.

He began his assistance by pressing money upon her. That horrid money, which even, when one like her is starving, it is so painful to receive as a gift. He did this, however, in so simple a way, as if it were such a matter of course that she should use his purse, that she consented to take a few guineas for her more immediate necessities.

Dull as he was at perceptions of this kind, he perceived her reluctance, and began to cast about for some means of helping her in a less blunt manner. He began to conceive in a kind of obtuse way, that if obligations of this nature were painful to her, they must be still more insupportably so to her husband.

So he set about thinking how he could accomplish his object in a better way. He recollected that Armand was an artist by profession. It was a bright thought, he fancied — a thought which would have been the first to present itself, one should have imagined. No doubt, Armand had pictures to sell; and he could offer what price he chose for them, so he said nothing more,

except to inquire whether any of Du Chastel's pictures were upon sale; and heard there were two or three yet remaining in the hands of a dealer, who held them as security for a small advance of money, and had not yet disposed of them. He said no more at that time, but taking down the address of the dealer, resolved within himself to go there the earliest thing in the morning, and offer such a sum for the pictures, as would at once restore his cousin for the present, at least, to comfort. What he would do more hereafter he should have time enough to consider. One thing was certain — he was rich enough, without inconvenience to himself, to maintain them all.

Leonard Fitzroy walked home to his hotel that evening, a more happy and self-complacent man, perhaps, than any possessor of wealth in that vast emporium of riches and luxury which surrounded him.

He ended the day with forming all sorts of pleasing visionary plans, for the benefit of those his long neglect had suffered to fall into such extremity.

* * * * *

Not so walked Evelyn home early the next morning after a feverish night, spent in the broken, dozing sleep of great fatigue, interrupted by frequent starts, as her patient uneasily moved in his bed, or required food or medicine; after having administered which, she would return to her place, — resolved not to go to sleep again, but falling off in a minute or two, — so oppressed was

she with weariness after the incessant exertions of so many days.

The interview with Leonard Fitzroy had relieved her from the harassing perplexity of not knowing where to turn next for a little help, and she was grateful for it; but the idea of obligations of this nature would have been a severe trial to her high spirit in any case, and something there was that rendered it more particularly painful in this.

He had been so long alienated and unkind. And though her heart told her that the cause of this lay in that which a woman ever excuses — deep love for herself — yet, altogether, he seemed almost the last man in the world that she would like to lay herself, and still less her husband, under obligation to.

Still, their distress and embarrassment had been so very great, that the few guineas in her purse were an immense relief, let the finer feelings say what they would. Urgent need was removed for the present, and a course of future supply in their necessities opened to them.

It was, therefore, with mixed feelings that, having given up the care of her father to the nurse, who alternated with her, she set forwards home.

She was impatient to relieve her husband and his father from some portion of their cruel anxieties; yet reluctant to explain to them the source whence help was come.

If she felt it so painful to accept the dependance of obligation: she, a woman — and one who had lately

become hardened, as she thought, to everything — how would they feel it?

That brave and great spirit — subdued by suffering, submissive to humiliation, calm and resigned to the will of God — but through whose still, deep, grand eyes, and noble features, the spirit of his long line of proud ancestors was still speaking? or that finer, and more delicate temperament — so exquisitely sensible to every impression, moral or physical — who had bowed himself to his destiny without complaint, but who was evidently sinking under an effort of courage and patience that was too much for him?

How would these two men feel, under the prospect of pecuniary obligations, which duty to the helpless would oblige them to accept — duty to the poor little famishing children, and the father dying in prison? Would not the pain of that effort be almost greater than all they had gone through?

Yet it must be made — oh, yes, it must be made, and the help with gratitude accepted. She ought to feel more thankful to the Supreme Giver; she ought to feel more cordially thankful to the man who was permitted to be the medium through which this help in their great need had come to them.

She was quarrelling with herself, poor thing! all the way as she hurried home. She could not bring her mind into a proper state; but she was so wearied with long suffering, so fevered with the night's watching, her limbs

trembled and shook so, and she was so heated and hurried, that she scarcely knew what she did or said, as opening the little wicket, she looked up and saw the elder Du Chastel watching for her.

He had a letter in his hand, and as soon as he saw her at the gate he turned away as if hurrying to meet her.

"What new disaster?" thought she, and her poor heart seemed quite to die within her.

She felt as if she could bear no more.

But who knows the burden they can support, till they are tried?

* * * *

"My dear child, how thoroughly tired you look!" as he put her arm into his and helped her into the house. For somehow her courage had, under the expectation of some fresh misfortune, altogether given way, and she could scarcely walk.

"Come in, my dear Evelyn! my best of daughters, come in — rest yourself, my love."

Du Chastel was tender, with more, even, than his usual tenderness. He was always kind, but there was something more than common in his kindness now — a consideration, a gentle sort of almost chivalric courtesy, a something that seemed like a reminiscence of the old nobleman so long obscured under the patient simplicity of the merchant's clerk.

"My love, you are quite done up. But courage — courage, Evelyn! Summon all your courage, my child... You must not break down just now."

She felt that he was preparing her for some overwhelming disaster, and her arm began to tremble violently in his. What could it be? — Whence could a new misfortune come? He who lies prostrate, need not fear to fall.

They had endured every form of distress. There was but one thing left to lose — Anne Douglas.

Anne Douglas had been during the last twelve months in France. She had been summoned there by important family affairs, needless to explain here. That was the reason that Evelyn had been deprived of her support and assistance during this last trying year.

She could bear the suspense no longer.

"Anne Douglas!" she faltered out.

"Yes, my dear ... I have a letter from her."

"Then she is not dead. I thought there was only one misfortune left to happen to us — I thought Anne Douglas must be dead."

"No, my child. — And why, Evelyn, must everything that happens to us take the form of a misfortune?"

"It seems always to be so," she said, despondingly.

"Nay, Evelyn, is that you? — Is that like my trusting, courageous, brave, good Evelyn?"

"I am so tired," she said, and shed a few tears.

They had by this time reached the house, and assisted by Du Chastel, she, with some difficulty, got up the stairs; for that heart which had supported her so long, seemed at once to have given way under this new uncertainty, and her limbs were sinking beneath her.

She was in her husband's arms.

She fell into them when she got into the room.

He pressed her fondly to his bosom. She had not observed a strange expression which was lighting up his eyes, for she had fallen on his breast quite worn out and exhausted.

She felt as if she was going very soon to die.

The father and husband exchanged looks of anxiety, which seemed to say, "How is it to be broken to her? — She is not in a state to bear it."

They seemed to ask each other which should speak first.

"My love," at last said Armand, whisperingly, as he kept fondly pressing her to his heart, and kissing her, "you are quite overcome to-day. I never saw you so before; and we want you to summon a little of your old courage and fortitude, my Evelyn, that you may meet with composure what we have to tell you.... Recover your pious self-possession, my darling."

"I am so tired," she repeated, almost like a child; "but tell me — tell me — and yet I don't know ... is it something very dreadful indeed?"

"No, no, my sweetest, not very dreadful at all: at any other time we would have told you at once; but your spirits have been so much shaken of late, we were afraid of the consequences. It is rather good news than bad we have to tell you."

"Is Anne coming home? — Is that letter from her?"

"She is not coming home just at present," said Du Chastel, raising her in his arms, and then gently laying

her down upon a little couch that used to stand for her by her husband's side.

"Armand, put your arm round her."

"Will you have something before I tell you? — You had better. It's not bad news at all — quite the contrary; but it will agitate you too much in your present state, I fear."

"Oh, Anne is going to be married!" with an hysterical laugh.

Du Chastel shook his head, but made no answer; Armand pressed her anxiously to his bosom.

"Don't laugh, Evelyn — try not to laugh — I never heard you laugh in this way before."

"So that's all!" she said, endeavouring to compose herself. "How nervous I am! but you made great ... odd ... why, it was not a matter of such immense importance — poor, dear Anne! I wish you had told me at once, dear sir, for I was so foolishly frightened ... Why did you not tell me at once, Armand, that it was going to be?"

"Drink that," said he, giving her a little composing medicine, "and then I will tell you, because *that* is not at all going to be."

"Then what can it be?"

She was more composed, for she was relieved from her first terrors, and her mind a little and wholesomely diverted from its previous agitation, by some wonder, and perhaps a shade of displeasure that they had made so much to do about nothing — She listened to Mr. Du Chastel, who now spoke thus —

"It can be something, if God so will, and may His grace be granted with it: something, my own dear, dear Evelyn — my good, precious Evelyn, which is, indeed, a blessing to your father's and your husband's heart, as it affords the means of showing our gratitude and honour for the ... child! child! child!" and quite overpowered, the old man gave way to a sudden burst of tears. "God has been very good to us!"

Her husband was kissing her hair, and weeping over her like a mother over her new-found child, whispering every fond name it was possible to imagine.

Du Chastel, after a moment's pause, to recover himself, went on —

"You can bear it now, dear child of my heart. Good girl! good daughter! ... There is news from France, which is so unexpected, so overwhelming, so far beyond anything we could have ventured in our wildest dreams even to hope, that we were afraid to communicate it to you too suddenly — We did not know how the heroine of suffering would bear this sudden unlooked-for change. Nerves better prepared than yours have given way after long trials of affliction under unexpected joy. Forgive us, love; we were afraid — we did not know how to set about telling you."

She looked up confused, but she smiled.

"I can't understand how it is ... But does it make you and Armand very happy?"

"Very, very happy, now we have told it to you."

"But you have not told it to me."

"I am going to ... There, lie still with your head on your husband's bosom, and listen to all the fine things you are going to hear. Why, Evelyn, Armand's beautiful Evelyn, you are going to be a fine lady again. How will you bear it? — but I need not ask. You have been used to the part ... Can you play it among the woods and swelling hills of Touraine, as you once played it at Donnington Abbey?"

She now raised her head, and saw, by his face, that he was breaking a great truth to her in this careless, playful manner.

"What!" said she; "Touraine, that was where — no, Provence was where your ancestors' estates lay."

She had the story by heart.

"True, my child," he said, pleased at this proof of recollection — it made her feel more than ever belonging to him. "But the estates which I have inherited, by the sudden death of my cousin, son of my late uncle, and which, through the exertions of my friends, have been a few days since restored to me — Protestant, Calvinist, Hugonot, heretic though I am — are in Touraine."

The catastrophe had been most sudden and unexpected, but not more so than actually at times happens in every-day life, where events and changes which surpass the wildest creations of romance not rarely occur.

The death of the heir to the estates obtained by the brother of Du Chastel's grandfather, as the reward of his

conversion to the predominant religion, had been followed by that of his son and grandson, then in possession.

Du Chastel was the next heir.

Times and opinions were rapidly changing under the dawning influences that were preparing the downfall of that old system; with its qualities, its virtues, its prejudices, wrongs, and cruelties. Old things were passing away, to be succeeded by that chaos, from which may a better creation, after successive days of fluctuating progression, arise! It was the turn of the Protestants now to be listened to. That great wizard, Voltaire, raised up, as it were, to sweep away a world of wrongs and corruptions, by as effective a besom of destruction as ever worked in this world of opinion, had cleared away a host of barbarous prejudices upon the subject of religion. If he had not taught men to be religious in a better way, the more the pity; but he knew not that better way. He at least, however, pointed out the possibility of committing great wickedness in the name of religion, if he was blinded to the rest. Men learned to be ashamed of the infamous cruelty and injustice perpetrated, not only by bad men, but by pretty good ones, under that sacred name; and the reign of Intolerance was at an end.

Her reign, I say — alas! her spirit still survives.

Hydra-headed monster she is! — though no longer allowed to satiate her appetite for slaughter with the blood of the saints. Shall we need another Voltaire to wage war with her? Shame upon all Christian men if we do.

Well. Du Chastel's friends found it now no longer impossible to get those estates restored to him, which, but for his religion, would have always been his own, now there was no person living to stand in his way.

He probably would not have permitted the attempt to have been made, had the present possessors been in existence — wisely or unwisely, I will not pretend to decide. His friends, among whom Anne Douglas was one of the most ardent, determined not to inform him of what was in agitation, till his fate was decided; a thing they had every reason to expect it would be, in the course of a few weeks.

Their exertions had been crowned with success, and in less time than could have been hoped — but there were powerful agents at work. And this great act of justice, was one of the first fruits of those edicts in favour of the Protestants, which marked the end of the century.

* * * *

It was no little mortification to Leonard Fitzroy, when he, having the morning after his interview with Evelyn proceeded to the picture-dealer, and paid an exorbitant price for the few remaining pictures by Armand Du Chastel which still remained on hand; and having requested the man to transmit the money, not forgetting the name of the purchaser, to Armand without delay —

It was no little mortification, I say, to Leonard Fitzroy, to receive a note from Evelyn the next day, which, excusing herself on account of her husband's inability,

she wrote in his name. In it she expressed the most grateful thanks for the extreme kindness and generosity of his intentions, but informed him, that an unexpected succession to the estates of his family, had happily terminated all Mr. Du Chastel's difficulties; and that so soon as her father, Mr. Marston, should be released from his present detention, and be well enough to be removed, it was their purpose finally to leave England, and reside in France, where, at her father-in-law's chateau in Touraine, she hoped to see him, ever a welcome guest.

And so Leonard Fitzroy got his lesson, and learned the danger of procrastination in doing kind things. And it may truly be said, the finding himself thus too late in this one, was — save the rejection of Miss Marston — the severest mortification he ever received in his life.

I do not know whether, if he had made the discovery of a new planet half-a-dozen days too late, that is to say, after it had been found, and its position made known by the astronomers at Paris, it would have been equally vexatious. The just too late, might have occasioned feelings something of the same provoking nature.

* * * *

The chateau of Peristal stands in a rich and beautiful part of Touraine, among uplands, crowned with fine woods, and glowing with purple and crimson vineyards, which sweep down in bold, undulating outlines to the wide-flowing Loire.

It is a fine old place, with its innumerable windows,

towers, turrets, and architectural ornaments in the taste of those days when Chenonceaux was built. They knew well, then, what belonged to the magnificent.

I know not a finer sight, than when, backed by its long line of woods, and with its terraces and gardens rich with flowers, and arches, and berceaux, the setting sun is glistening upon the innumerable windows of its long façade; nor a more splendid view, than that which the immense gallery on the upper floor, adorned with pictures, statues, and other works of art, commands. It stretches over hills, and woods, and waters, and chateaux and churches, and vineyards, and corn-fields, and pastures; melting into the blue distance under the glorious sun of la belle France — which, say what they will of it, is so wondrously beautiful a France in some of her many aspects.

There Du Chastel lived long to reign, and see his grandchildren brought up upon his knees. Beloved and honoured he was, as not many grand seigneurs of that day were; but he belonged rather to the times at hand, than the times gone by, after all.

His protestant principles and modes of thought all tended towards that spirit of progressive freedom, and equal justice, which was what gave life — and still gives life — to that huge mass of unchastened passions and opinions, uncorrected by wisdom and common sense, which have distorted and deformed the French revolution.

Had there been more of his sort in France, at the

time when that great movement of men and things began, it is not, perhaps, too much to assert, that the French revolution might have been as moderate in its very extravagances, (all revolutions must have their extravagances in degree), and as solid in its results as our own.

The godly, serious spirit, that prevailed to so wide an extent among us at the time of our own disturbances, preserved us in the midst of the disorders of the cavaliers, and the intemperances of fifth-monarchy men, — from the fatal subversion and confusion which ensued upon the other side of the water; but they had done their best to drive all such a spirit out of France.

* * * * *

It was a lovely sight, upon a fine summer evening, to see the family party at Peristal.

Du Chastel, so calmly happy, surrounded by those he loved, and leaning upon the arm of that treasured one, whom he had been blessed as the means of restoring to her place in society.

We will not quibble with the term. Whether he had raised her to a higher place or not, they none of them troubled themselves to inquire. This thing was certain: she was formed to adorn any rank to which she might have been elevated, and well to dispense any power or influence with which she might be invested.

Her beauty, her spirit, her active benevolence, her virtues, and her rare abilities, are still the theme of tradition in the neighbourhood of that castle, which is

yet standing; for such was the influence, and the popular esteem, admiration, and love, which the then proprietors of the old place possessed, that I believe not a window was broken or tree defaced, among all the disorders of those turbulent days.

Armand indulged his taste for art; and the fine productions of his pencil are still to be seen covering the walls of his own home, — instead of adorning those of other people.

He succeeded his father in due time; and when the elder Du Chastel died, the artist perished with him. Objects more serious and important than art — let people deify the latter as they will — had succeeded.

A patriot — a conscientious administrator of justice in the courts of his domain — a proprietor intent upon the improvement of the people inhabiting the great estate committed to his charge — the father of his numerous dependents — indefatigable in the advancement of everything which would tend to the moral, religious, and temporal advantage of mankind — so he laboured, and so he lived, and so at last he died.

Evelyn and he rest with the honoured father in one tomb; and their great-grandchildren, for aught the editor of these papers knows, may be reigning now in their place.

Mr. Marston had died before the family left England.

THE END.

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